

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 1 - 17 November 2020

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa.

Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 17 November 2020)

- Claims made by Tigray President Debretsion that Eritrea is involved in the war (specifications below), denied by Eritrea, but local activity reported from within Eritrea.
- Claim made by Tigray Central Command Spokesperson (Getachew Reda) that UAE was involved in attack Tigray through drones sent from Assab port (in Eritrea) but no confirmation of where they made impact.
- Ethiopian troops recalled from Somalia and redeployed to Tigray. Tigray troops remain in Somalia. Claims made by reliable source that 200 Tigrayan officers were arrested in Somalia, but no confirmation.
- Uganda expressing interest to bring Ethiopian Federal leadership and Tigray leadership together. Pictures appearing of a meeting in Uganda, but no evidence of TPLF presence. Mediation denied by Addis in press statement, who cited the meeting had a different objective.
- Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Demeke Mekonnen Hassen reported to have visited Kenya afterward Uganda for a meeting with President Uhuru Kenyatta. Pictures appeared on Twitter.
- Letter sent by Ethiopian Federal Ministry of Defense to request firing of Tigray General in charge of security at AU; request was implemented.
- Ethiopian government reportedly requested (according to *one* news output only) 4.000 soldiers from South Sudan People's Defence Forces.

Military capacity (as confirmed per 17 November 2020)

- Prime Minister Abiy stated last week that rocket launchers targeted in Tigray had a range of around 300km, consistent with a Scud-type short range ballistic missile. PM Abiy reported the missiles were destroyed, but missile launches continue from Tigray.

Damage from the war (as confirmed per 17 November 2020)

- In Tigray: damage to Tekeze electricity dam and sugar industrial complex (disputed by the Wolkayit Sugar Factory via the Ethiopian News Agency), rocket hits outside Mekelle in the village of Indeyesus near a Church, one child injured.
- Heavy fighting in Southern region Tigray – Amhara border (Raya) with casualties amongst troops (estimated 760 casualties).
- Rockets fired by Tigray forces on Asmara (airport and Ministry of Information), which did not hit targets, but caused an explosion large enough to break windows.
- Rockets fired by Tigray defense forces on Bahirdar and Gondar; military terminals serving as a base to carry out airstrikes, claims the Tigray regional government.
- Reports on social media of execution of around 54 elderly in Tigray border town Zalembessa (attributed to Eritrean forces on social media).

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 17 November 2020)

- In Tigray: 70.000 refugees from Eritrean origin in four camps near border (near Shire-town). Potential humanitarian disaster looming as international organisations are leaving and no food and supplies are coming in to Tigray due to closures of airports and close of transport to Tigray. Call by UN for humanitarian corridors, as international agencies currently have no access into the region.
- Around 25.000 refugees fled from Amhara and Tigray to Sudan, including Eritrean and Tigrayan soldiers, Federal government soldiers and refugees from Amhara region. New camp facility opened in Sudan (an old Ethiopian famine refugee camp has been re-opened). Sudan has officially closed borders on 5 November (this may not be fully enforced given complexity of the border).

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 17 November 2020)

- Communication starting up following complete shut-down, but only landlines within Tigray and satellite internet use is increasing somewhat. Mobile phones and internet not working.
- Banks are open, bank system and ATMs not working.
- Electricity is back on.

Press and media (as confirmed per 17 November 2020)

- Ethiopian journalists, including Addis Standard editor Medihane Ekubamichael and Bekalu Alamrew, arrested in relation to their journalistic work.
- Stricter cyber-crime regulations reportedly come into force in Ethiopia on 17 November; may lead to closer monitoring and regulation of (social media) communications.
- Spokesperson Ethiopia Federal: Billene Seyoum (<https://twitter.com/BilleneSeyoum>)
- Spokesperson Tigray: Getachew Reda (https://twitter.com/reda_getachew)

- Disclaimer: All information in this situation report is presented as a fluid update report, as to the best knowledge and understanding of the authors at the moment of publication. EEPA does not claim that the information is correct but verifies to the best of ability within the circumstances. Publication is weighed on the basis of interest to understand potential impact of events (or perceptions of these) on the situation. Check all information against updates and other media. EEPA does not take responsibility for the use of the information or impact thereof. Report to info@eeepa.be any additional information and corrections.

Links of interest

<https://www.msn.com/en-xl/news/other/corporation-dismisses-tplf-s-claim-about-wolkait-sugar-factory-bombing/ar-BB1b3ASX>

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<https://www.ibtimes.com/heat-hunger-sudan-struggles-shelter-25000-ethiopian-refugees-3083192>

https://thessherald.com/2020/11/16/ethiopia-requests-4000-troops-from-s-sudan-as-violence-reaches-boiling-point/?fbclid=IwAR0oSlhpAyKVTAO5uZwiFveWyBGxrs85ynNWX2dRklTejvIGNgsbV_WtPB0

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<https://cpj.org/2020/11/ethiopian-journalist-bekalu-alamrew-arrested-accused-of-disseminating-false-news/>

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<http://communications.amecea.org/index.php/2020/11/13/ethiopia-amidst-escalating-ethiopias-tigray-conflict-amecea-bishops-appeal-for-peaceful-dialogue/>

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 2 - 18 November 2020

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa.

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Damage from the war (as confirmed per 18 November 2020)

- Cities of Shire and Aksum have been attacked by the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF), Amhara Special Force, and the Eritrean army. Fighting takes place in close proximity to Eritrean refugee camps, which are under attack. This includes Hitsats camp with a population 25,248, many unaccompanied minors. UNHCR had earlier evacuated refugees and humanitarian staff from Shimelba camp to Hitsats. Also refugee camps Adu Harish and May Ayni under attack. The total population of the four camps is estimated at around 90.000 people. 5,000 Internally Displaced Persons are also in Shire.
- It is reported that Shire, Raya area, including (South Tigray) and Aksum are now under control of the ENDF. BBC reported Aksum under Ethiopian Federal control.
- Sources on the ground report that United Arab Emirates jets and drones were part of the attack on Mekelle, Shire and Aksum.
- Tigray regional forces have given up Humara Town and Alemata town. Evacuations from both towns, from Alemata to Mekoni.
- The Ethiopian government stated that Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) destroyed infrastructure (4 bridges) on the road from Shire towards Mekelle to delay the approach to the capital city. Tigray President Debretsion Gebremichael confirmed that the defence line had shifted and towns of South Tigray were under Federal control, but denied destroying bridges.
- ENDF expected to have dominance in the air. Reuters quotes Jane's that ENDF has 15 Sukhoi Su-27SK and eight MiG-23ML fighter jets, around 20 Mi-24 and Mi-35 helicopter gunships and a range of air defence and missile systems, as well as scores of Russian T-55 and T-72 tanks.
- Sources on the ground report massive looting and destruction of property, houses, food, and cereal, taking place; especially by Eritrean forces.

- Letter from Tigray President Debretsion Gebremichael (included in this sitrep below) stating that “non-African actors” had provided Unmanned Aerial Vehicles to Eritrean and Ethiopian forces.

Humanitarian situation, refugees and internal displacement (as confirmed per 18 November 2020)

- The Institute of Population Studies from Mekelle University [issued a letter](#) to the European Institutions (attached to this situation report) warning of a devastating regional and international humanitarian and refugee crisis if the conflict continues.
- Hundreds of thousands of people are reported displaced in Tigray by sources on the ground. Internally Displaced Persons are particularly mentioned to come from Shire, the four refugee camps in Tigray, Rama and Mereb and from Zalembera (all Northern border towns).
- The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have launched emergency numbers for people looking for relatives in Ethiopia.
- 4,000 refugees are crossing into Sudan daily. There are now an estimated 30,000 refugees in Sudan who fled this conflict.

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 18 November 2020)

- Fighting has been reported between Tigray and Eritrea in Quala area (Adi Quala), Zalembera, Taruna (i.e. Tsorona), Ali Tina (Alitena), Wadqomdi, and Bademe.
- Sudanese media report that Eritrean soldiers have fled to Sudan. Unverified reports are circulating that Eritrean opposition holds the Eritrean town of Senafe.
- Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen made a round past Ugandan President Museveni, Kenyan President Kenyatta, and Rwandan President Kagame, but no official mediation including TPLF has taken place yet.
- Djibouti issued a communique to the Federal Government of Ethiopia on 15 November calling for peaceful settlement, recognising PM Abiy as “sole guarantor of that Unity and territorial integrity of Ethiopia”.
- Russia approved plans for a naval base in Sudan, Port Sudan, with room for 300 people and 4 nuclear-powered war ships.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 18 November 2020)

- 34 bank accounts of businesses affiliated with the TPLF were suspended.
- Banks in Tigray are open, but have little money.

Press and media (as confirmed per 18 November 2020)

- Spokesperson Ethiopia Federal: Billene Seyoum (<https://twitter.com/BilleneSeyoum>)
- Spokesperson Tigray: Getachew Reda (https://twitter.com/reda_getachew)
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Links of interest

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-ethiopia-conflict/ethiopia-faces-hell-in-battle-for-tigray-say-rebels-idUKKBN27YOSM>

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<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-54984056>

<http://rfi.my/6qLp.W>

<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNHCR%20Ethiopia%20Tigray%20Update%2018%20November%200.pdf>

Report from the Mekelle University Institute of Population Studies: <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/CompressedInstitute-MU-Humanitarian-and-Refugee-Crises-escalating1.pdf>



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The Government of National Regional State of Tigray
ቤት ዕሕፈት ርእሰ ምምሕዳር
Office of the President

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Date 17, Nov, 2020

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Ref No

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Excellency,

The government of Tigray National Regional State has, over the last couple of years made several attempts at resolving the crisis engulfing our country, Ethiopia, through an all-inclusive and comprehensive dialogue. However, the relationship with the federal government has degenerated to an active combat situation over the last two weeks, with Dr. Abiy Ahmed publicly, declaring that he would bomb dense urban areas of Tigray. He has followed up on the threat and for the last two weeks major Tigray towns have been under heavy air bombardment, with no regard to international law pertaining to protecting civilians under war situations.

Currently, the government of Dr. Abiy Ahmed has chosen to escalate its discriminatory and bellicose policy against Tigray. It has conspired and coordinated with a foreign state, Eritrea, and has since 3 November 2020 launched a full scale scorch to earth military campaign against Tigray. Almost three quarter of the Ethiopian army and sixteen infantry and mechanized Eritrean divisions are mobilized and have occupied a big chunk of Tigray territory. Civilians have already started to suffer the consequences of this senseless war and thousands are displaced and killed. Many thousands have also fled to the Sudan.

Excellency,

Dr. Abiy Ahmed ignored all domestic and international attempts to resolve the constitutional and political crisis through dialogue and has rather chosen to resolve it through bloody military campaigns. He has first escalated the crisis into a regional level by inviting the Eritrean government to attack his own people. He has now escalated the conflict into an international scale by allowing non-African actors to

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መቐለ

Mekelle

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Tigray

Ethiopia



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Office of the President

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rally on his side and inflict more harm to his own people and in the process made peaceful resolution of the conflict even more difficult.

Excellency,

A new and worrying element is, since the 15th of November, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV's) provided to the Eritrean and ENDF armies by non-African actors have joined the war theatre. These belligerent actions risk the destabilization of not just the horn of Africa but the already restive red sea area. The irresponsible behavior of Dr. Abiy Ahmed's administration has also internationalized and complicated the crisis.

The consequences of ignoring the concerted military campaign against the people of Tigray will have grave consequences to regional and international peace and security. It is in this context that the Tigray National regional state calls upon your Excellency to condemn the war waged against the People of Tigray by the Ethiopian and Eritrean governments and their non-African partners and put all the necessary pressure on the aforementioned governments, both African and non-African, to immediately halt their indiscriminate atrocities against innocent people. It is our sincere hope that the international community will act at the earliest possible time before the situation deteriorates to a genocidal crime and avert the further internationalization of the conflict.



Sincerely,

Debretsion G/Michael /PHD/
President

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Mekelle Tigray Ethiopia



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Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

November 18, 2020
Addis Ababa

Distinguishing TPLF from the People of Tigray

The Federal Government of Ethiopia reaffirms its commitment to uphold the rule of law, its resolve to bring unlawful perpetrators to justice and denounces, in the strongest of terms, mis-characterizations that this operation has an ethnic or other bias.

Make no mistake the current law enforcement operations in Tigray target primarily the disgruntled, reactionary and rogue members of the TPLF clique that have been destabilizing Ethiopia. As such, the Federal government intends to put an end to the deadly crime spree of this group within TPLF, which has also affected the people of the Tigray region.

The people of Tigray will be the first to benefit from an operation that works towards a community based on the rule of law, freedom, unity and democracy. Our vision for Ethiopia is a that of a multinational society, where the many ties that bind us make it possible to cherish our diversity while upholding our unity.

Our common heritage and destiny is strong enough to overcome the threat posed by the divisive, sinister and toxic machinations of the TPLF clique.

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Ethiopia: A New Horizon of Hope

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 3 - 19 November

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Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 19 November)

- Conflict has evolved from a civil internal conflict to a regional conflict with confirmed exchange of hostilities between Tigray/Ethiopia and Eritrea.
- Unverified reports state that Eritrean troops (and their officers) along the Tsorona front have defected to Tigray.
- Civil society in South Sudan expresses concern that the war in Ethiopia will negatively affect the situation in South Sudan.

Diplomacy for peace and dialogue

- The Interreligious Council of Ethiopia called on all parties [in Amharic](#) to give priority to peace and stability (translation available [in English](#)).
- Reliable source states that Kenya plans to send a delegation to Addis Ababa led by former Minister of Foreign Affairs Kalonzo Musyoka to explore cease fire and dialogue and PM Abiy would have accepted this invitation..
- The Ethiopian Reconciliation Commission came out on Facebook defending the war against Tigray.

Military capacity (as confirmed per 19 November)

- New reports that drones are being deployed to targets in Tigray, pointing to possible involvement of UAE from the Assab military base.
- Sources state that Ethiopia is making use of airports in Eritrea for deployment of troops.
- South Sudan Peacekeeping mission UNMISS reports no change in deployment of Ethiopian troops in South Sudan.
- Germany provided Ethiopian National Defence Forces with emergency health equipment; this is being discussed in Foreign Committee in Bundestag.

Damage from the war (as confirmed per 19 November)

- Airstrike in Mekelle today, 19 Nov 2020. Earlier today, 12:41 (06:41 local time), Abiy's airforce jet bombed in Mekelle city targeting civilians. Source has visited one of the targeted areas (Source from Mekelle).
- On twitter narratives appear of violent attacks (cannot be verified) on civilians in Tigray/Ethiopia.
- Social media report (cannot be verified) details of execution of 58 elderly in Zalembesa (Ethiopia/Tigray border-town) by Eritrean forces.
- Pictures of letters from employers and narratives are circulating on social media of documents requesting employers to suspend Tigrayans from their employment in Ethiopian locations. Examples: Ethiopia airlines and construction company; referred to as 'ethnic profiling'.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 19 November)

- The Ethiopian Agency for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) expressed concern over mistreatment of Eritrean refugees in Tigray amid the fighting around the refugee camps.
- Only access to water is facilitated at this time for the 90.000 refugees in four camps near Shire (Hitsats, Shemelba, May Aini and Adu Harish).
- Fighting reported near Hitsats camp.
- In total 31.000 refugees have crossed from Ethiopia to Sudan, including soldiers defecting from Eritrea.
- UN estimates the number of refugees from the conflict has increased to 4.000 refugees fleeing to Sudan every day.
- Concerns about the prospect of famine due to the combination of the bad harvest and locust plague

Press and media (as confirmed per 19 November)

- Spokesperson Ethiopia Federal: Billene Seyoum (<https://twitter.com/BilleneSeyoum>)
- Spokesperson Tigray: Getachew Reda (https://twitter.com/reda_getachew)

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Links of interest

<https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Statement-Amharic.pdf>; <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Statement-of-Interreligious-Council-of-Ethiopia.pdf>
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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 4 - 20 November

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Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 20 November)

- Somalia's Foreign Minister was fired after issuing, then retracting, a statement about the situation in Ethiopia. The retraction was motivated by the reasoning that the statement did not represent the views of the Government of Somalia.
- Reports have come in that several hundred Ethiopian soldiers of Trigray-origin were disarmed in Somalia by ENDF.
- Report of Eritrean delegation visit to Egypt on 17 Nov. Egypt is a traditional ally of Eritrea. According to reports Eritrea asked support. Foreign Minister Shoukry of Egypt calls for peace and security in the region.

Military capacity (as confirmed per 20 November)

- Bellingcat reports that the use of UAE drones from United Arab Emirates (UAE) from the harbour Assab (Eritrea) for attacks on Tigray is possible, based on research of the drones and their origin. The TPLF-leadership has made repeated claims of drone-attacks in the Tigray-region.
- Ethiopian government soliciting funding from diaspora for a war-fund (circulating on social media).
- Reported that TPLF is holding the defense of Alamata (Tigray region).
- Around Shire and refugee camps (Tigray region) use of heavy tanks is reported.

Damage from the war (as confirmed per 20 November)

- Mekelle University hit by strike by airplane; it is reported that 50 students are wounded (afternoon at 12:41 on 19 November) and pictures seen of Interim University President, Fetien Abay, visiting the students.

- Continued fighting on Southern front with efforts to unite the Zalembesa and Rama/Mereb invasion of the Tigray region.
- ENDF approaching Aksum. Call for protection of Aksum as a UNESCO world heritage site and important heritage of Ethiopia and Tigray.
- Rocket attack by TPLF on Bahir Dar (Amhara region) 1:40 am 20 November.
- Loss of life on all fronts.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 20 November)

- Over 33,000 refugees arrived in Sudan due to the conflict in Ethiopia, reported by UNHCR.
- UN plans for 200.000 refugees to arrive from Ethiopia in Sudan over the next 6 months (Geneva briefing 19 November).
- UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Mark Lowcock, says that humanitarian agencies are struggling to maintain access to Ethiopia's Tigray Region.

Reported situation in Ethiopia and Tigray (as confirmed per 20 November)

- Reports of profiling of Tigrayans in Ethiopia, including freezing of bank accounts, revoking of licenses, and house searches, reported on (social) media.
- GSM mobile phone service launched in Tigray region by Tigray government (first reported 19 Nov, re-appearing in social media on 20 nov by former head Information Network Security Agency of Ethiopia, currently in Tigray) and phone contact made. Operational only in Tigray.

Press and media (as confirmed per 20 November)

- International Crisis Group and former Bloomberg journalist William Davison loses work permit in Ethiopia (letter circulating). Davison has not confirmed.
 - Spokesperson Ethiopia Federal: Billene Seyoum (<https://twitter.com/BilleneSeyoum>)
 - Spokesperson Tigray: Getachew Reda (https://twitter.com/reda_getachew)
- Disclaimer: All information in this situation report is presented as a fluid update report, as to the best knowledge and understanding of the authors at the moment of publication. EEPA does not claim that the information is correct but verifies to the best of ability within the circumstances. Publication is weighed on the basis of interest to understand potential impacts of events (or perceptions of these) on the situation. Check all information against updates and other media. EEPA does not take responsibility for the use of the information or impact thereof. All information reported originates from third parties and the content of all reported and linked information remains the sole responsibility of these third parties. Report to info@eepe.be any additional information and corrections.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 5 - 22 November

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa.

Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#). Previous situation reports can be [found here](#).

Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 22 November)

- The African Union appointed an envoy to mediate in the conflict in Ethiopia, consisting of Joaquim Chissano, former president of Mozambique; Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, former president of Liberia; and Kgalema Motlanthe, former president of South Africa.
- Reports that injured Ethiopian soldiers as well as Prisoners of War from Tigray are taken to Eritrea.
- Reports that members of the Eritrean opposition, along with Tigrayans, are facing ethnic profiling including house searches and arrests in Addis Ababa.
- H.H. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the UAE, urges Ethiopian parties to return to dialogue.
- The Eritrean Catholic and Orthodox Churches sent out statements calling for peace.

Military capacity (as confirmed per 22 November)

- ENDF Military spokesman Colonel Dejene Tsegaye warns civilians that Mekelle is surrounded with tanks and that civilians have 72 hours to surrender. Mekelle has half a million inhabitants and approximately 800 students at Mekelle University campus with students from Ethiopia and abroad.
- Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed gives Tigrayan regional forces 72 hours to surrender before the military begins an offensive on the regional capital of Mekelle.

Damage from the war (as confirmed per 22 November)

- Human Rights Watch calls the threat by Ethiopian military spokesperson of an artillery attack to citizens in Mekelle who do not surrender unlawful and targeting the whole city together a collective punishment; US Ambassador Susan Rice qualifies this as war crime.
- Fighting in the Tigray region is ongoing on three fronts, Adwa, Gerhu Sirnay and in the South (Raya). Heavy losses reported.
- It is reported that possibly up to 20 battalions of the Eritrean Defence Force (EDF) are taking part in the fighting on all three fronts.

- PM Abiy issued a statement saying that the ENDF holds Dansha, Humera, Shire, Dhiraro, Aksum, Adwa, Adigrat, Alamata, Chercher, Mehoni, Korem and other places. According to the TPLF, the Ethiopian, Eritrean and Amharic forces are moving through these cities but are not holding all of them.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 22 November)

- The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs warns refugees in Tigray risk lack of water due to fuel shortage for the water pumps.
- Close to 40,000 refugees have arrived in Sudan. The refugees give testimonies of extreme violence used in the conflict, including against civilians.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 22 November)

- All bank accounts in the Tigray region have reportedly been frozen.
- UN OCHA estimates that over 2 million people will need food assistance in Tigray.

Press and media (as confirmed per 22 November)

- Journalists indicate that access to Tigray is nearly impossible and that foreigners risk hostilities and violence if they go. Access to and operating in Addis Ababa is also becoming increasingly difficult with difficulties experienced in obtaining visas.
- International Crisis Group journalist and expert Davison confirms from his home that his working permit in Ethiopia was revoked and that he was informed he immediately had to leave the country.
- South Sudanese activists indicate that they were summoned to the Ethiopian embassy in South Sudan to answer questions regarding a statement in which they expressed concern over possible withdrawal of Ethiopian peacekeeping troops.
- Spokesperson Ethiopia Federal: Billene Seyoum (<https://twitter.com/BilleneSeyoum>)
- Spokesperson Tigray: Getachew Reda (https://twitter.com/reda_getachew)
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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 6 - 24 November

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 24 November)

- Evidence of Eritrean involvement as AFP journalist reaches Humera (Tigray) reporting that “multiple people told that during the battle they witnessed mortar bombs whistling in “from the north”, meaning Eritrea. Ethiopia's government denies TPLF claims that Eritrea is involved in the fighting, but acknowledges making use of Eritrean territory.
- Witness of Eritrean reception camp EndabaGuna in Tigray states serious violations of rights of Eritrean refugees by members of Eritrean People Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) and Eritrean troops in civilian clothes in Tigray joining the ongoing war on the side of Abiy, manhandling, harassing and forcefully taking them, most probably back to Eritrea. If unchecked this may spread to Adi Harush and Mai Ayni that are for now not a target of such violations.
- UNHCR is no longer in Shire (Tigray) to protect Eritrean refugees in camps.
- Eritrean refugees in Tigray are pleading for the international community to come to their rescue.

International dimension (as confirmed per 24 November)

- UN Security Council to discuss ‘Tigray’ on 24 Nov.
- Ethiopian deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mokenen to visit Brussels 24 Nov. (unc)
- European Parliament debates an urgency resolution on the situation in the Horn on Thursday 26 Nov.
- UK House of Lords to debate the situation in Ethiopia on 24. Nov.
- High Level EU engagement to support the AU High Level Envoys asked in a letter sent to EU Presidents, by 55 EU experts. [EN](#), [DE](#), [FR](#), [IT](#)
- ICRC ready to act as neutral intermediary of people detained in relation to fighting in Tigray.
- US Senators Chris van Hallen and Cory A. Booker write to US Secretary Pompeo appreciating the State's dep engagement with “the Government of Ethiopia, TPLF, neighboring countries, the African Union, and the United Nations”, and “urge” direct engagement with PM Abiy and press all parties to “an immediate ceasefire, de-escalation of tensions, protection of civilians, and commitment to addressing all outstanding grievances through a peaceful dialogue to stabilise Ethiopia's imperiled democratic transition.” (November 19). Secr Pompeo visits the Middle East 24 Oct.

- Human Rights Watch warns that indiscriminate actions against civilians constitute war crimes.
- Genocide Watch issues Emergency Alert: the Gov of Ethiopia is ineffective in addressing ethnically motivated violence between ethnic groups.

Military capacity (as confirmed per 24 November)

- Heavy fighting on three fronts continues, mainly roads and gateways to Mekelle (Tigray capital).
- Tigray Defence Force (TDF) claim to have attacked and destroyed thousands of ENDF and Eritrean soldiers organized in 18 divisions in three fronts (namely, Adwa, Idagahamus and Ray-Mokoni).
- Tigray Defence Forces (TDF) report heavy fighting on the Raya front with one division (21). TDF claims that almost all ENDF forces are destroyed, including two tanks and one helicopter during the fighting.

Damage from the war (as confirmed per 24 November)

- AFP journalists witnessed extensive damage and deaths in Humera, Ethiopia, but were not allowed to visit the hospital to establish an official death toll.
- Picture of the severely damaged Dejena Hotel in Shire which was bombed last week circulates on social media.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 24 November)

- UNHCR states that refugees are arriving into Sudan in Kassala, Gedaref, and more recently Blue Nile state. New sites to accommodate refugees are urgently needed. Um Raquba, a new site being used, has a capacity of 6,500 people and is expected to be full within a few days.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 24 November)

- President Debretsion of Tigray tells AFP that people are ready to die in defense of the right to administer the Tigray region.
- Amhara administrators and civil servants are brought in in some cities under ENDF control.
- United Nations' humanitarian coordinator for Ethiopia, Catherine Sozi, called for the protection of the 500.000 inhabitants of Mekelle, aid workers, as well as essential infrastructure.
- In Tigray phones are not working and aid organisations have difficulties reaching the 2 million in need of protection, food and water. Refugees and aid workers on the ground are incommunicado.
- Hospitals and primary health-care facilities in northern Ethiopia, in and around areas that have seen intense fighting, are in urgent need of medical supplies.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 24 November)

- Videos on social media show Ethiopian citizens from Tigray origin being intimidated and mishandled by police and denied entry on their flights at Bole airport.
- 796 people arrested in Addis Ababa alone as of Nov. 04, since the federal government started the military operation in Tigray, in relation to "alleged plots", says the Addis Ababa Police Commission.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 7 - 25 November

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 25 November)

- Three Ethiopians originating from Tigray stationed with the UN Mission in South Sudan have been repatriated by Ethiopia from Juba to Addis Ababa. UN not involved and raises concern.
- This follows an incident earlier this month in South Sudan where “Ethiopian soldiers disarmed a senior ethnic Ethiopian Tigrayan officer” and “escorted him to the capital of Juba, and forced him onto a Nov. 11 Ethiopian Airlines flight to Addis Ababa,” states Foreign Policy.
- UN fears Ethiopia Purging Ethnic Tigrayan Officers from its peacekeeping missions in Somalia. An internal United Nations document shows concern those troops could face torture or execution.
- Human Rights Concern Eritrea reports it has credible evidence that Eritrean troops, including conscripts from the national service, are fighting in Tigray.
- Asmara warns through neighbourhood wardens that citizens stay indoors and further restricts travel.

International dimension (as confirmed per 25 November)

- Deputy PM Demeke Mekonnen in Brussels and Italy. In Brussels, he met with EU External Action Service VP Joseph Borrell. ENA reports that Demeke met Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte.
- PM Abiy issues a statement on the adherence to non-intervention in internal affairs.
- EU EEAS issues a statement: “we call on all parties to put in place the conditions that will facilitate unimpeded access to people in need, the cessation of hostilities, the non-interference of any external party, and the freedom of the media. Engagement with the High-Level Envoys appointed by the Chair of the African Union should open the door for a dialogue that is the only way forward to avoid further destabilisation.”
- Sen. Chris Coons, member of Senate Foreign Relations Committee, spoke with MP Abiy (Nov. 23), discussing the AU mediation effort by AU Chairman and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa.
- EU SR Alexander Rondos denounces what he calls the “give war a chance brigade”.
- The UN Security Council meeting on the situation in Tigray set for yesterday was first cancelled then reconfirmed. The closed-door meeting ended without a statement.

- Herman J. Cohen, former ass. Secretary of State calls on the leadership of PM Abiy and Tigray leader Debretsion, urging for reconciliation among all ethnic groups and “relentless” foreign pressure for peace.
- Following debate in House of Lords, Lord David Alton points to the danger of “genocide”.
- Belgium Mission to the UN calls for an “immediate ceasefire” and “inclusive national dialogue”.
- German Mission to the UN calls for “adherence to international law” and “welcomes and supports regional African efforts, esp AU, IGAD, and member states for de-escalation”.
- Norway issues a statement of “deep concern” of the situation in Tigray, Ethiopia and regional impact.

Military capacity (as confirmed per 25 November)

- Aljazeera: TDF state that Tigray forces have destroyed Ethiopia “mechanised division” 21 entirely.
- Mekelle gives 24-hour ultimatum to all soldiers of hostile troops to leave the region.

Damage from the war (as confirmed per 25 November)

- It was reported that Adi Harush, a refugee camp for Eritrean refugees in Tigray, was attacked. Camp residents stated that the guards fled after a short exchange of fire.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 25 November)

- UNHCR reports that 41.000 refugees have arrived in Sudan. Sudan pledges to keep its borders open for refugees.
- Sky News quotes military sources that Ethiopia government forces are “holding up large numbers of refugees and preventing them from fleeing.”
- Hundreds of refugees reported near the border of Sudan, waiting for family members and reporting of family members shot and/or lost due to the military actions by all sides.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 25 November)

- The Ethiopian Human Right Commission released a report on Mai Kadra based on interviews between 14-19 November in Mai Kadra, Abrehajira, Sanja, Gondar, Dansha and Humera. Its findings are contradicted by researcher @_Will_Brown. Information on responsibility for this incident is inconclusive.
- Communication from Tigray is blocked. The phone lines have been cut and the internet is switched off. The banks are closed and there is no electricity.
- Travel by media to Tigray is heavily restricted.
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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 8 - 26 November

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 26 November)

- Reports that Ethiopian military is engaged in fighting on another front along the Kenyan border. Locals in Moyale town say at least 9 Kenyans arrested and taken into Ethiopia as soldiers battle Oromo Liberation Front Shane group in Western Ethiopia.
- The Gov of Kenya has held talks with Ethiopia on the abduction of 9 Kenyans in Moyale by Ethiopian forces. Kenya is pressing for their release.
- Djibouti President Ismaïl Omar Guelleh states PM Abiy had to “punish those seeking to break up the country.”

International dimension (as confirmed per 26 November)

- The EU warns of a destabilisation of the Horn and calls for an immediate ceasefire and non-interference of external parties.
- Reported that UN Sec Gen Antonio Guterres spoke to Ethiopia PM Abiy and AU chair and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa to try and de-escalate the conflict.
- US President-elect Biden’s choice for National Security Advisor, Jake Sullivan, raised concern about the situation in Ethiopia and urged for the start of an immediate dialogue.
- British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab, in discussions with President Uhuru Kenyatta, expressed concerns about the risks to regional stability and security if the violence in Ethiopia will escalate.
- In a letter to the UN, the International Oromo Lawyers Association calls for de-escalation of conflict in Ethiopia as the situation poses a serious threat to regional peace and security.

Military capacity (as confirmed per 26 November)

- Ethiopian PM Ahmed Abiy issued a statement on Twitter on the elapsing of the 72-hour ultimatum, stating that the Ethiopian National Defense Forces have been directed to commence the “third and final phase of the Rule of Law operations”.
- In social media multiple reports of defensive fortifications being prepared in Mekelle. These include barricades in the streets.
- An Ethiopian ultimatum for Tigrayan surrender elapsed. Expectations of an imminent attack on the Tigrayan regional capital. The government has previously warned civilians of no-mercy.

- Human Rights Concern Eritrea (HRCE) reports to have further evidence that elements of the Eritrean armed forces are facilitating ENDF operations, actively participate in the offensive and are on the ground within Tigray.
- Reports that witnesses from Eritrea conscripted in the national service were put in Ethiopian uniforms and were taken to the front lines; they state that few survived.
- Both sides continue to claim success. The ENDF claims to have encircled Mekelle, while the TPLF claims to have destroyed another division of Ethiopian armed forces and Tigray sources report that four divisions of the Eritrean armed forces have been defeated.

Damage from the war (as confirmed per 26 November)

- After the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission reported that at least 600 civilians were killed on November 9th in Mai Kadra by militias loyal to the regional government, AFP notes that different stories are being told by victims and that the full extent of the event is unknown.
- Telegraph also reports attacks by Amhara militias.
- The Telegraph reports, after investigation in refugee camps in Sudan, that towns in Tigray were indiscriminately attacked by artillery fire coming from the border with Eritrea.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 26 November)

- The UN states that most refugees from Ethiopia in Sudan are in overcrowded transit centres at the borders waiting to be relocated to the designated settlement sites. As of 24 November, only around 8,000 had been relocated.
- The UN and humanitarian partners in Ethiopia are now urgently seeking US\$76 million until January 2021 to help 2 million people in Tigray, Afar and Amhara regions. Canada announces 3 million in assistance for those affected by the conflict. The EU is preparing 4 million € in aid.
- UNICEF has reported that the conflict in Tigray has left 2.4 million children in need of urgent help.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 26 November)

- Electricity, communications, and internet services remain cut. Little access to or contact with the region is available.
- AFP reports that a photograph supporting the claim that TPLF soldiers handed in guns is false.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 26 November)

- Fears that the conflict in Tigray and beyond may lead to other clashes and escalation of ethnic tension, which has already started. Particularly mentioned is the Konso zone in south-western Ethiopia.
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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 9 - 27 November

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Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 27 November)

- The organisation Arbi Harnet publishes they have evidence that Eritreans held in forced and indefinite national service have been taken to Tigray war fronts in Ethiopian uniforms.
- Arbi Harnet quotes a witness stating that Eritreans who were demobilised from national service as they were “unfit” are called back because “there is such a shortage of soldiers”.
- Tigray outlet DW presents videos of Eritrean soldiers captured by TPLF. Daniel (18) was sent by officers to do labour but found himself as a soldier to fight in border town Bademe. In the video Eritrean soldiers state they should not be involved but had no choice as they were in the first line of fire.
- Eritrean Bishops urge peace: “Once a war starts, no one knows when and where it ends,” they said, noting that “all the parties are losers and there is no winner. (..) war does not have any meaningful value, and is always unjust.”

International dimension (as confirmed per 27 November)

- The African Union Envoys traveled for Ethiopia hours before the ultimatum was to expire.
- The President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, has expressed “his concern at the ongoing conflict and humanitarian crisis in Ethiopia (..) and offers his support to those efforts by friends of Ethiopia from the African Union region and from beyond, to help bring about a speedy cessation of hostilities and to find a sustainable way forward.”
- The EU Commissioner for Crisis management, Janez Lenarčič, met with the Ethiopian Deputy Prime minister, Demeke Mekonnen, and urged that a political solution including all parties is

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needed and that humanitarian access must be guaranteed. Lenarčič stated he will travel to Sudan to meet with refugees.

- The European Parliament adopted resolution RC9-0383/2020 which calls on “both parties to commit to an immediate ceasefire and to settle political differences by democratic means within the framework of the country’s constitution.”
- Member of European Parliament, Assita Kanko, calls on the EU to stop all aid to Ethiopia.
- Coverage on social media that Ethiopian troops are stopping refugees fleeing into Sudan.

Military capacity (as confirmed per 27 November)

- The Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Abiy Ahmed, has announced that the Ethiopian National Defence Force will launch the final offensive.
- The Tigray People’s Liberation Front told Reuters they are fighting 16 divisions of the Eritrean army.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 27 November)

- Reports, including from refugees in Sudan, suggest that Ethiopia deployed soldiers to the border to stop refugees from crossing into Sudan and numbers of arrivals have decreased.
- PM Abiy announced that a humanitarian access route managed by the Ethiopian government will be opened and that the government has begun distribution of basic supplies.
- Coverage on social media that the number of refugees arriving in East Sudan is dropping (due to blocks at the border).

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 27 November)

- UN reports critical shortages in Tigray. Food supply for 100.000 Eritrean refugees in Tigray will be gone in a week. 600.000 people requiring food aid remain without food.
- Disclaimer: All information in this situation report is presented as a fluid update report, as to the best knowledge and understanding of the authors at the moment of publication. EEPA does not claim that the information is correct but verifies to the best of ability within the circumstances. Publication is weighed on the basis of interest to understand potential impacts of events (or perceptions of these) on the situation. Check all information against updates and other media. EEPA does not take responsibility for the use of the information or impact thereof. All information reported originates from third parties and the content of all reported and linked information remains the sole responsibility of these third parties. Report to info@eepe.be any additional information and corrections.

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<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/africa/news/2020-11/eritrea-ethiopia-conflict-tigray-peace-bishops.html>
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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 10 - 28 November

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 28 November)

- PM Abiy Ahmed has rejected dialogue with leaders of the Tigray regional government, but is willing to speak to representatives there “operating legally”. He also said that the government was committed to the “protection and security of civilians”.
- Political advisor of the president of the regional government of Tigray, Getachew Reda, announces TPLF has appointed “a representative who is empowered to discuss and decide with members of the AU” to seek immediate cessation of hostilities; measures for protection of civilians; unimpeded humanitarian access; Independent investigation by external parties of any alleged war crimes or violations of international law.
- Reports from people on the ground in Eritrea that blasts were heard in Eritrea in Massawa, Dekemhare and Nefasit (11 km from Asmara). Dekemhare is the access point to the Tsorona front.
- In Nefasit (Eritrea, near Asmara) a fuel depot was targeted, but the projectile was shot down (reports from the ground).
- Sudan has announced that it is evacuating its citizens from the Tigray region.
- Reports of Eritreans forced to participate in the war in Tigray as part of the indefinite obligatory national service report that they are used as ‘cannon fodder’ and human shields: “the way the battle is fought means there are many casualties and there is no time to rescue them. We were completely overwhelmed and are being shot at from both the Tigrayan side as well as from our own side”. (Arbi Harnet and various sources)
- Somali military is fighting inside the Tigray region, according to increasing social media reports (unconfirmed).

International dimension (as confirmed per 28 November)

- The African Union representatives met in person with the Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (28 Nov.). Their access to Tigray has been denied.
- Norway will pay 27 Million Kroner in emergency aid for refugees from the conflict in Tigray and Sudan.
- ICRC emphasizes that “civilians are not targets, ambulances are not targets, health workers are not targets and health facilities are not targets.”
- UNICEF urges parties to the conflict in Ethiopia to spare children from the impact of hostilities in the Tigray region: “Some 500,000 people live in Mekelle, half of them are children”.
- UNICEF expresses concern about the safety of hundreds of humanitarian workers, who are still in Mekelle and elsewhere across Tigray.

- Kenneth Roth, the executive director of Human Rights Watch, states that “with evidence mounting of atrocities committed on both sides, it is essential to send in international investigators now”.
- The French Foreign minister, Jean Yves le Drian, met with Demeke Mekonnen, Deputy PM of Ethiopia, and expressed concern about the escalation of violence in Tigray and the worsening humanitarian situation in Ethiopia and Sudan.

Military situation (as confirmed per 28 November)

- In an interview with the BBC, ICG Ethiopia analyst William Davidson said that Tigrayans will likely return to the hills and guerilla warfare once conventional resistance becomes impossible.
- [Military map](#) shows concentration of fighting on the Tigray Eritrean border in Tigray territory.
- Concern that the following civilian buildings in Mekelle are seen on a list of military targets: Yohannes IV Museum, Abraha We Arsbeha Church, Dimtsi Weyane P.L.C., a news-based television and radio network, and Messebo Cement Factory, a Private Limited Company of EFFORT (Endowment Fund for the Rehabilitation of Tigray) group companies established 20 years ago. it is the biggest factory in the region in terms of production and job creation.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 28 November)

- Bombshells landed in refugee camp Adi Harush (sheltering Eritrean refugees) in Tigray killing two or three Eritrean refugees (reported: a child and a 20-year old girl) and left 6 wounded, reported from inside the camp.
- UNHCR reports that there are now 43.000 Ethiopian refugees in Sudan. They urgently require international assistance.
- Journalists reported that they visited the Sudan-Ethiopia border and saw Ethiopian soldiers, confirming reports that the exit to Sudan is being blocked.
- The number of refugees arriving in Sudan is reduced significantly, from 7000 a day to 700 a day.
- Fears grow for the nearly 100.000 Eritrean refugees in Tigray. The UNHCR is “extremely worried” about the impact the conflict could have on them. The situation has left the UNHCR and other organisations unable to provide food and water to the overcrowded refugee camps.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 28 November)

- The Internet, electricity and other forms of communication remain cut in Tigray.
- The United Nations says that it has 200 aid workers in Mekelle.
- Satellite image on social media shows cars lined up at gas station in Mekelle, highlighting fuel shortage.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 27 November)

- The Ethiopian flag appears in pictures without the central element.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 11 - 29 November

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa.

Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

Military situation in the Horn region (as confirmed per 29/11)

- Air missile attacks and bombardments in Mekelle (morning), and PM Abiy Ahmed claims that Mekelle is under control of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) and that the military operation is complete. The Regional Government of Tigray claims that ENDF does not control Mekelle at this time (28 Nov).
- Reuters cites a diplomat in direct contact with residents in Mekelle saying that explosions were reported in the north of the city, in the Hamidai area. This is in a close location to the big industrial factories like Mesfin Industrial Engineering (MIE) and the Referral Hospital of Ayder, the biggest Hospital in the region.
- Other targets in Mekelle are the microfinance bank of Dedebit, which was assisting people since national banks were closed for the last few weeks in the region (Reuters).
- Claims that an ENDF Lieutenant General Bacha Debele has been captured (appointed by PM Abiy several weeks ago).
- Unconfirmed reports that two ENDF Generals have been killed.
- Reports of targets hit in the Southern and Western part of Eritrea by Tigray Defense Forces.
- Reports of (at least) six rocket attacks on Asmara (Eritrea) from Tigray (evening) (28 Nov).
- Reports that the Regional Government of Tigray has warned foreign diplomats to leave Addis Ababa immediately as it will be a target for missile attacks in retaliation. Other targets mentioned in the warning are Bishoftu (Oromo state), Bahir Dar, Gondar and Dessie in (Amhara region).

International responses (as confirmed per 29/11)

- Former PM of Ethiopia, Hailemariam Desalegn, congratulates PM Abiy and the government, the people of Ethiopia and the people of Tigray (twitter).
- The Pope appeals for an end to the violence: "I invite everyone to prayer and to fraternal respect, to dialogue and to a peaceful resolution of the disagreements."

- Human Rights Watch states that Ethiopian government has responsibility to immediately facilitate humanitarian access.
- AU Envoys issue communique after their talk with PM Abiy Ahmed, stating the Envoys were briefed on the current military operations.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 29/11)

- Thousands of Eritrean refugees, recognised by UNHCR, have been abducted by Eritrean soldiers from refugee camps under the Ethiopian Federal Administration of Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA) in Tigray, presumably to be forcefully returned to Eritrea.
- Calls for urgent investigation into the abduction of Eritrean refugees under international protections and their forceful return to Eritrea.
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi notes that humanitarian aid organisations urgently ask for 147 million USD to aid refugees in Sudan for the next six months.
- Continued reporting that the number of refugees reaching Sudan is diminishing and that Ethiopian soldiers are on guard at the border. Refugees told AFP that anyone trying to cross must avoid the main road and remain unseen by the soldiers.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 29/11)

- Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed states that Federal Police is now looking for TPLF leadership in Mekelle.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 29/11)

- Ethiopian Federal Police issues arrest warrants against several Ethiopian citizens for “inciting terrorism”, including some academics in the diaspora and activists in #WarOnTigray.

Press and media (as confirmed per 29/11)

- Tigray Mass Media Agency (TMMA) and Dimisti Woyane (DW) International are jammed.
- Phone and internet to the Mekelle and Tigray region remains closed off.
- Hate speech intensifies between different ethnic groups in the region.
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<https://twitter.com/AbiyAhmedAli/status/1332730958999588864?s=08>

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<https://twitter.com/AUChair2020/status/1332617283060060161/photo/1>

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 12 - 30 November 2020

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

Regional Situation (as confirmed per 30 Nov)

- Al Jazeera reports that Sudan's Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have seized significant amounts of weapons, ammunition and military equipment on Sudan's eastern border with Ethiopia (28/11).
- Several reports of looting mainly by Eritrean soldiers in Tigray in towns and rural areas, including of farmers, universities and industries.
- Reports that Eritrean refugees in camps under international protection in Tigray being forced onto trucks by Eritrean soldiers and sent to Eritrea.
- Indication of other fighters involved in the war arena, such as Somali fighters, trained by Eritrea. (*Unconfirmed*)

Military situation in (as confirmed per 30 Nov)

- Tigray Mass Media Agency (TMMA) and Dimisti Woyane (DW) International report that Tigray Defense Forces (TDF) have hit an Eritrean fighter jet which crashed near Mekelle; TV crews were at the site and are sending out pictures. The pilot, who survived the crash and has been captured, is named as Tadesse Abraha Abebe, an Eritrean pilot.
- A general of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) has been severely wounded and is receiving treatment in Korea Hospital, Addis Ababa.

Damage and casualties from the war (as confirmed per 30 Nov)

- Tigray Media House reports DW TV building was hit in 28 Nov attack.
- Reports of civilian casualties in Mekelle (Tigray). So far, at least 19 civilians have died and 35 civilians have been injured as a result of the offensive of 28 Nov. Of these 6 civilians died near Aider, one whole family in Kebelle, 16 near Mesfin Ind. in Mekelle.
- Factories and Universities, private shops, hotels and businesses are looted and burnt to the ground in Mekelle (Tigray).
- Ethiopian state TV says that 70 graves were found in Humera, Tigray.

Political responses (as confirmed per 30 Nov)

- Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Mr Gedu Andargachaw, congratulates Amhara Special Forces and militias in Amharic for their success and victory in Twitter and Facebook posts which were later changed several times, to include ENDF.
- United States Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Tibor Peter Nagy Jr., expresses concern over fighting and shelling in Mekelle and urges immediate end to the conflict and restoration of peace, protection of civilians and humanitarian access.
- Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs statement calls for opening of transport- and communication lines and humanitarian access for UN and humanitarian actors to Tigray and to open consular services to citizens.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 30 Nov)

- The Eritrean Movement for Democracy and Human Rights reports that the World Food programme has advised that Eritrean refugee camps in Tigray received their food rations for November in October. They have not received those for the upcoming month of December.
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi expresses concern over the messages that Eritrean refugees have been abducted, stating that this would be a “major violation of international norms.”
- ICRC reports that 1,000 Eritrean refugees from Shire have come to Mekelle and are looking for assistance; ICRC has difficulties in meeting their needs, due to disruption of supply.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 30 Nov)

- Reports of people fleeing Addis Ababa and Bishoftu (Oromo regional state) to Hawassa and Adama following a missile attack warning from the Tigray regional government. (*Unconfirmed*)
- Warning for evacuation to Bishoftu is in Oromia region by the Regional Government of Tigray. Bishoftu is the place where the Ethiopian Air force headquarters is stationed.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 30 Nov)

- Mekelle is reportedly calm at this time.
- Tigray Media House - live claims that Mekelle is firmly under Tigray regional government control.
- ICRC reports that local hospitals and health facilities in Mekelle (Tigray) are facing a high number of trauma patients and are running dangerously low on medical supplies to care for the wounded as well as other medical needs and conditions.
- Ambulances run by the Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS) have been transporting injured and deceased people to Ayder Referral Hospital in Mekelle (Tigray).
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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 13 - 01 December

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International Dimension (as confirmed per 01 Dec)

- President of the Regional Government of Tigray, Debretsion Gebremichael, is in South Sudan and met there also with Egyptian President Abdel Fatah al Sisi. Presence confirmed by sources in South Sudan.
- Egyptian President al Sisi arrived in South Sudan on Saturday 28 Nov. Ethiopian ambassador to South Sudan, Fisseha Shawl, left South Sudan abruptly.
- Report by South Sudan news that Ethiopia expelled the South Sudanese Ambassador while the Ethiopian and South Sudan Government deny this.
- Europe's crisis management Commissioner Janez Lenarčič to visit Ethiopia Peace Minister, Muferiat Kamil, Tuesday to urge end to blockade for international aid organizations to Tigray; will visit Sudan on Wednesday and visit refugees in Kassala and Gedarf states on Thursday.
- UN Refugee Chief Filippo Grandi concerned about nearly 100,000 Eritrean refugees in Tigray amid reports that many have been abducted and forcefully returned to Eritrea. If confirmed, this "would be major violations of international norms. It is my strong appeal for the prime minister of Ethiopia for this situation to be addressed as a matter of urgency."
- US Secretary of State Pompeo urges "complete end" to fighting in a call with Ethiopian PM Abiy.
- Report on social media that Al Shabaab fighters have overrun Somali military base at Ba'adeyn village in Mudug region, seized army vehicles, weapons and ammunition; civilian casualties.
- Federal Government of Somalia recalls its Ambassador to the Republic of Kenya and informs the Ambassador of Kenya to Somalia to depart to Kenya for consultations.
- Situation in Ethiopia and Tigray discussed in Australian Parliament.

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 01 Dec)

- TPLF claims to have captured Eritrean troops fighting alongside Ethiopian forces. (*unconfirmed*)
- Report that Eritrean Unit 35 entered Adi Girat. (*unconfirmed*)
- More Somali fighters reported in Tigray, from two groups: ONLF (Ogaden National Liberation Front), fighters from Ethiopian Somaliland, and Eritrean-trained Somali fighters. (*unconfirmed*)

Military situation (as confirmed per 01 Dec)

- The Government of Ethiopia has declared that the fighting is now over.
- Reports of fighting taking place in Tembien, east of Mekelle with heights overseeing Mekelle. TPLF claims they have retaken Aksum and that they are fighting in Shire and near Wikro.
- ENDF General dies in Addis Ababa after treated from wounds sustained in Tigray. *(unconfirmed)*

Damage and casualties from the war (as confirmed per 01 Dec)

- In Chercher (Tigray Region), fighting 11 days ago resulted in a massacre: people from Yallo (Afar) were hacked to death, burnt or shot, mostly women, young children and elderly. *(unconfirmed)*
- Ongoing reports of severe looting from Tigray to Eritrea and Amhara regions.

Civilian casualties (as confirmed per 01 Dec)

- Tigrayan TV is saying that at least 19 people were killed during artillery shelling of Mekelle.
- Ayder Mekelle Referral Hospital filled with war casualties and is running out of basic supplies.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 01 Dec)

- Afar Region (Tigray's eastern border) preparing for a massive influx of IDPs from Mekelle into Aba'ala. Reported that 80,000 people fled Mekelle.
- The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission urges the government to allow access to Tigray.
- UN demands a neutral corridor and access to the Tigray region to provide humanitarian aid.
- Germany has increased its contribution for humanitarian assistance to Ethiopia to 5 m€.
- Over 45,000 refugees in Sudan. PM Abiy states that most of the refugees are young males. UNHCR data states that nearly half are children and a large number is female. BBC's Anne Soy reports she spoke to many women and children while visiting Sudan refugee camps.

Political situation (as confirmed per 01 Dec)

- PM Abiy tells Parliament that ENDF troops did not kill civilians, and behaved responsibly.
- PM Abiy Ahmed has said that the next focus is on rebuilding Tigray.
- Oromo leader, Jawad Mohammed, calls for all-inclusive dialogue from Qality Federal Prison.

Press and media (as confirmed per 01 Dec)

- TPLF television has started broadcasting again.
- Journalist Kassa HaileMariam from Awramba Times arrested in Addis Ababa.
- US House of Representatives to hold meeting on 'The Unfolding Conflict in Ethiopia' by the Subcommittee: Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights on 3 Dec, 2020 2:00pm.
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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 14 - 02 December

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International dimension (as confirmed per 02 Dec)

- Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen has spoken over the phone to the Foreign Affairs Ministers of Norway and Austria.
- A letter sent to UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres by Lord Alton of Liverpool, signed by various human rights organisations, urges for pressure for Ethiopian authorities to open a safe humanitarian corridor and expresses concern over the reports of forceful return of Eritrean refugees.
- US President-elect Joe Biden phoned Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta; they discussed regional security and instability.
- The US House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs will hold an open hearing on the unfolding conflict in Ethiopia on Thursday 3 December. The Global Society of Tigray Scholars members and members of the Eritrean diaspora in the US express concern over the composition of witnesses for the hearing.
- EU officials (unidentified by name) have stated that the EU may delay EUR 90 million in budget support to Ethiopia over the impact of the conflict on human rights and international law including war crimes.
- ICC complaint filed against WHO Chief Tedros Adhanom, in his capacity of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, announced in press conference by David Steinman, alleging that Ethiopian senior government leadership, including Tedros, controlled Subordinates who committed one or more crimes in 2016 in addition to those committed 2013-2015.

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 02 Dec)

- Former Chief of Staff of the Eritrean Defence Force Mesfin Hagos, now in exile, claims that Eritrean soldiers have been involved in the fighting from the start and that the Eritrean people have been involved in the war without their knowledge or permission.
- TPLF leader Debretsion Gebremichael rejected the notion that he would strike at the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa and stated that he would be open to talks with PM Abiy, if the Ethiopian forces would leave Tigray and depending on the content. (30 Nov)
- The TPLF claims to still be heavily armed.

Human Rights (as confirmed per 02 Dec)

- A phone recording has emerged supposedly of an Eritrean soldier saying that they had been ordered to murder any Tigrayan. These orders came from the top and were carried out as the Eritrean soldier says to have killed 30 himself. The origins of the recording have not been confirmed.
- A phone recording states that Eritrean refugees in Tigray “are in a very miserable situation” and that they are “kidnapped and killed” by forces under command of Eritrea and Ethiopia.
- The Ethiopian Human rights Commission is urging authorities to immediately cease preventing any passenger from travelling without appropriate legal justification.
- CORRECTION SITREP 01 DEC: In Chercher (Tigray Region), fighting 11 days ago resulted in a massacre: people from Yallo (Afar) were hacked to death, burnt or shot, mostly women, young children and elderly. (*unconfirmed*)

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 02 Dec)

- Tigray: The UN has said that food has now run out for nearly a 100.000 refugees in the Tigray region.
- Tigray: A message reported from an Eritrean refugee from Adi Harush refugee camp states that the refugees have no supply, that between 70-90 are leaving each day and that Amhara forces are searching for the TPLF troops who hid in the area of the camp. They also state Amhara forces broke into the UNHCR office and the ration storage building to search for weapons and soldiers.
- Tigray: A message reported from Mai Aini refugee camp states that the water depot has been destroyed, leading to water shortage; the report also states that an Eritrean refugee was shot and killed by a guard for unknown reasons.
- Many Tigray refugees arrived in Yallo (Afar) and Afar people assisting to the best of their ability with very few resources available.
- Sudan: Nearly half of the refugees registered in Sudan coming from Ethiopia are children and around 43% are women, according to UNHCR.
- Spokesperson for UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres announces: “we have pre-deployed personnel to key locations in Afar and Amhara region to support possible assessment and response missions in Tigray, while negotiations on access continue.”

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 02 Dec)

- The Ethiopian government states that one of the central TPLF members, Keria Ibrahim, has surrendered to federal forces.

Press and media (as confirmed per 02 Dec)

- A journalist of Tigrayan origin, Dawit Kebede, has reportedly been detained in Addis Ababa. Witnesses said that he was being verbally and physically abused.
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Links of interest

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 15 - 03 December

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#). **Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)**

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 03 Dec)

- From the 43 divisions of Eritrea, 41 are fighting in Tigray. Reports received that soldiers are forced to fight, including refugees who have been abducted from refugee camps under international protection in Shire (Tigray), with nearly 100.000 Eritrean refugees.
- Meskerem (Eritrean opposition) reports that Eritrean authorities have detained 500 Eritrean soldiers that refused to take part in the fight against Tigray. The Eritrean army has taken significant casualties and devastation and casualties on both sides are significant.
- Eritreans in Germany received a video of an Eritrean speaking to family members from Eritrea who had been involved in fighting in Tigray; the persons involved in the fighting stated that their units were told to kill any wounded persons who could not easily be returned to Eritrea. (*Unconfirmed*)
- PM Abiy acknowledges the role of Eritrea in the war in Tigray.

International dimension (as confirmed per 03 Dec)

- European Commissioner for Crisis Management has met with the Minister for Peace of Ethiopia. During the meeting he called for a peaceful solution of the Tigray Crisis and immediate, full and unimpeded access of aid workers to conflict-affected areas.
- The German ambassador to Ethiopia has met with the Ethiopian House of Representatives and urged for a solution through political dialogue.
- The US Assistant Secretary of State states that the active military operations are now over and the implementation of unfettered humanitarian access is critical.
- Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) have called for the release of all journalists detained in Ethiopia. Half a dozen journalists have been arrested since the start of the conflict. While Ethiopia has made some major reforms in freedom of the press since 2018, there are fears of a relapse.
- UNHCR Chief Filippo Grandi expresses concern over the number of separated children and family members, calling it 'exceptional'.
- French Ambassador to Ethiopia Rémi Maréchaux met with the Ethiopian House of Peoples' Representatives to discuss France/Ethiopia bilateral relations.
- Calls for access to Tigray to investigate possible war crimes during a debate in the British Parliament.

- Ethiopia Foreign minister, Demeke Mekonnen, participated in the 21st Extraordinary Session of the Executive Council of the African Union to discuss the launch of the Africa Free Trade Area and the 2020 theme of the AU: "Silencing the Guns".
- Rally for peace organised in Washington DC for Saturday 5 December.

Human Rights (as confirmed per 03 Dec)

- A humanitarian and diplomatic source told Reuters that four Ethiopian aid workers (possibly a fifth) were killed in one of the Eritrean refugee camps in Tigray.

Situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 03 Dec)

- PM Ahmed Abiy announces that he has held discussions with political parties and civil society organisations on elections mid-2021.
- PM Ahmed Abiy states that he has been in negotiation with Dr. Mulu Nega on Tigray; Dr. Mulu is the chief executive of the Transitional Government of Tigray, appointed by Abiy. The Transitional Government is not recognised by the elected regional government of Tigray.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 03 Dec)

- Sudan: Hundreds of children are arriving in Sudan separated from their parents. They are especially at risk of exploitation, says Save the Children.
- Tigray: The situation for the 96.000 refugees in Tigray remains dire. Reports suggest that food and other necessities have run out.
- The United Nations and Ethiopia have agreed an aid corridor according to a UN spokesman, Saviano Abreu. The UN says it will receive unimpeded access to deliver aid to government held areas. The United Nations has previously pre-deployed personnel to prepare such an eventuality.
- Refugees from Tigray continue to report horrific details of killings and bodies remaining unburied.
- IOM states that the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) estimates that 1.98 million people could be affected by displacement in Northern Ethiopia in a worst case scenario.
- United Arab Emirates sponsored the transport of 100 tons of emergency aid which arrived in Sudan for refugees from Ethiopia.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 03 Dec)

- 69 people have died in violent clashes in Konso, Oromo in southern Ethiopia.
- Ethiopia Telecom announces responsibility for the blackout of communications of over three weeks in Tigray.
- Telecommunications have been partially restored to the Tigray region in areas such as Dansha, Turkan, Humera, Shiraro, Maytsebri and Maykadra, and fully restored in Alamata, Ethio Telecom has said.
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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 16 - 04 December

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#). **Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)**

International dimension (as confirmed per 04 Dec)

- World Refugee & Migration Council members and others have called on the UN Secretary-General to convene an extraordinary meeting of the UN Security Council.
- Crisis group, an independent organisation aimed at preventing war, called for inclusive dialogue in Ethiopia. Former Ethiopian PM, Hailemariam Dessalegn, is a trustee of the group.
- The IGAD Peace and Security Division concluded its annual meeting with IGAD member states; the meeting was conducted with financial support from the EU.

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 04 Dec)

- People of Mekelle are out in the streets blocking all roads and confronting the armed Eritrean troops & Amhara militias who brought hundreds of trucks and started to loot public/private properties (social media).
- Reported that UAE drones bombed Workaemba, which is 20 minutes away from Abiy Addi in Tigray and 85 civilians died.
- Mechanized military forces from Eritrea entered Hitsats refugee camp, via Shimelba camp, on 19 November, and in subsequent days looted the camp and local communities around the camps.
- Eritrea is alleged to be forcefully arming Eritrean refugees in Tigray to fight host communities.
- Radio Erena (Eritrean diaspora media) reports that over a 100 Ethiopian soldiers, who were in Senafe and other Eritrean hospitals, are being transferred back to Addis Ababa. Reportedly these planes also carry dead bodies.
- Eritrean sources confirm the looting of properties from Tigray to Eritrea: "The Adwa marble factory is already here in Eritrea."
- The Tigray government has formally requested the opening of a humanitarian and press corridor into the regional state.
- Many Ethiopian ENDF soldiers were airlifted to Eritrea before the start of hostilities in Tigray region. Many more were brought in soon after the conflict started.
- Negotiations surrounding the GERD dam in Ethiopia, which has strained relations between Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt, are ongoing. Sudan's minister of Agriculture, Abbas, says that the conflict has had no effect on negotiations.

- US Asst. Secretary demands full and unhindered humanitarian access and restoration of communications throughout Tigray to protect civilians and provide assistance to all in need.

Human Rights (as confirmed per 04 Dec)

- Tigray: Eritrean Refugee camps in Tigray are still vulnerable. Fighting around Mai Ayni camp. Reports that many refugees are trying to find safe places. Social media showing pictures of refugees walking on the roads.
- Supplies are being prepared to send to Tigray. Permission has been given by the Ethiopian government to provide aid in government controlled areas. Damaged roads and infrastructure is going to make it more difficult for the region to be reached.
- Doctors in Mekelle report indiscriminate artillery barrages on civilian areas, looting by armed men and the deaths of at least 27 civilians and injuries to more than 100.
- Sudanese forces have reported that Ethiopian soldiers are stopping refugees from crossing the border into Sudan.

Military situation (as confirmed per 04 Dec)

- Claims that Shire and refugee camps are back under control of Tigray regional government.
- The TPLF claims to have captured 15.000 soldiers which it has handed over to the ICRC.
- There is low intensity fighting over the whole region.
- All sides claim to have taken precautions to spare civilian casualties.
- PM Abiy Ahmed told the Ethiopian Parliament that the Ethiopian government was consulting the government-appointed Tigray provisional government during operations in Tigray.
- An aid worker has reported that fighting continues North, West, and South of Mekelle, capital city of Tigray Region. (Reuters)
- Drone strikes were reported near Tembien, west of Mekelle, on December 3rd. Pictures of the damage in Werqamba, around Tembien town, are circulating.
- Most of the Eritrean armed forces are currently in Tigray.
- ENDF soldiers are posing for pictures in Mekelle. Little damage can be observed in those pictures.
- Many weapon caches have been captured by ENDF forces in Mekelle.

Situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 04 Dec)

- The Ethiopian government is indicating preparations of elections.
- Reports Ethiopian Federal Police criminal investigation team entered Mekele.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 04 Dec)

- Tigray: Aid convoys are ready to move into Ethiopia's Tigray region. There is an acute shortage of food, medicine and other supplies.

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Links of interest

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 17 - 05 December

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

International dimension (as confirmed per 05 Dec)

- The US House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs heard four witnesses on the ongoing conflict in Ethiopia.
- European Commissioner for Crisis Management Janez Lenarčič urges the Ethiopian government to lift the communication blockade, after speaking to refugees from Ethiopia in Sudan who had no information on the people they left behind.
- EU Commissioner Lenarčič states that the UN-Ethiopia deal on humanitarian aid must include non-Federal government controlled areas.
- UN states fighting is continuing in many parts of the Tigray region, including in areas with refugee camps with refugees under international protection. This complicates efforts to provide humanitarian assistance since the agreement only covers assistance to areas under federal control.
- According to the spokesperson and advisor for the President of the Tigray regional government, fighting is ongoing on three fronts involving indiscriminate bombing in Abiy Addi (Tigray) by federal forces and Eritrea.
- Reports from Eritrea that citizens are forced to participate in the war in Tigray against their will.
- Deputy Prime Minister of Ethiopia Demeke Mekonnen spoke with the President of the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa about Ethiopian cities' potential to host international sports events.

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 05 Dec)

- Reports that the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) have retaken control of the Khor Yabis area in eastern El Gedaref on the border between Sudan and Ethiopia. The demarcation of the border in the area has been unclear since the 1950s and Sudanese troops have been absent from the area for 25 years.

Human Rights (as confirmed per 05 Dec)

- The New York Times reports that they have spoken with doctors in Mekelle which report at least 27 civilian deaths and over a 100 wounded from the shelling last Saturday. This contradicts the government's claim that the city was taken without any casualties.
- Tigray TV has shown images of burned and shelled villages. Villagers interviewed on the TV claim that Ethiopian EADF troops have been looting and killing people while passing through.
- The BBC has spoken to residents in Mekelle who complained about lack of water, electricity, and

looting.

Military situation (as confirmed per 05 Dec)

- The UN has said that fighting is still taking place in many parts of Tigray. This has complicated efforts to deliver humanitarian aid.
- TPLF leader Debretsion Gebremichael states per text message that fighting is ongoing in four locations previously held by the Federal Government, including two near Mekelle and two 60 kilometres North of Mekelle.
- The Ethiopian Federal government claims most TPLF leaders are captured or killed.
- Reports of ongoing bombing of Abiy Addi in Tembien, Tigray; 90 km from Mekelle.
- Fire exchanges between Tigray forces and federal government soldiers around Mai Ayni (3 Dec.) and military activity converging close to Mai Ayni refugee camp. Many Eritrean refugees from Mai Ayni have fled the camp and some have been pictured walking on the roads with suitcases as they fear being killed or arrested. Mai Ayni was reportedly hit by shells on 3 December, leaving a woman, child and an elderly man injured, without medical supplies to treat the wounds.
- Tigrayan TV has shown images of heavy artillery being used by TPLF elements.

Situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 05 Dec)

- CORRECTION (Sitrep No. 15): 69 people have died in violent clashes in Konso, *SNNPR (Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region)*
- Over a hundred staff of Tigrayan ethnicity from Ethiopian Airlines have been suspended from work, sparking accusations of ethnic profiling within the airline company.

Situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 05 Dec)

- Attempts by federal troops and Eritrean troops to loot the Ayder hospital, the main referral hospital in Mekelle, 80% of patients are wounded by the bombardment of the city. Two civilians were killed and four injured as they resisted.
- Demonstrations by large numbers of Tigrayan civilians against federal Ethiopian and Eritrean troops in Mekelle have led to at least one death and four injuries on 3 December, doctors state. TPLF leader Debretsion states there are protests ongoing in Aksum as well.
- Many of Mekelle's roads have been blocked with stones. BBC spoke to Mekelle residents who spoke of looting and lack of water and electricity.
- The UN states that humanitarian aid is delayed by logistical and security issues. It will resume operations "as soon as the situation allows". It also noted that 1,000 refugees from Tigray arrived in Sudan on 3 December, noting that a small number of Eritreans are among them.
- Report of heavy looting from Mekelle with trucks transporting goods to Eritrea and Amhara region.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 05 Dec)

- UNHCR states that over 47,000 refugees from Ethiopia have now arrived in Sudan. RFI notes that refugees arrive with often nothing but the clothes they wear.
- Eritrean refugees in Tigray speak of lack of medical supplies.
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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 18 - 07 December

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Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

International dimension (as confirmed per 07 Dec)

- The United States withdraws all of its 700 troops from Somalia after Ethiopia withdraws 3000 troops.
- EU Commissioner, Janez Lenarčič, states that “the Ethiopian Government must allow ‘unimpeded, sustained and secure access’ for emergency relief”.
- A senior European official expresses grave concern over the agreement to allow access for humanitarian aid to Tigray, in that this only covers areas controlled by the Ethiopian federal forces and the bureaucratic requirements are “onerous”.
- Expert warns that an Ethiopian counterinsurgency campaign targeting Oromo Liberation Front splinter faction, OLF-Shene, is now spilling over into Northern Kenya.

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 07 Dec)

- Heavy fighting breaks out in Somalia (Halgan area of Hiran region) between AMISOM and Ethiopian forces after attempts were made to disarm Tigrayan officers of these forces resulting in the death of 21 Tigrayan soldiers and 20 Ethiopian soldiers of other ethnicities.
- Reported tension between Sudan-Ethiopia border over land dispute Sudan as the Sudanese army takes control of Khor Yabis, agricultural land owned by Sudan but contested by Ethiopian farmers.
- Ethiopian Foreign Ministry spokesman, Dina Mufti, claims that Ethiopia and Sudan have agreed on a plan to immediately start repatriation of refugees that fled the conflict, back to Ethiopia.
- Wandimo Asmamo, a former general of the Ethiopian armed forces, and originally from Tigray, concerned about cooperation between Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea resulting in “ethnic cleansing”.
- Hospitals in Senafe, Teseney, Barentu, and Keren (all in Eritrea) reported to be full of wounded soldiers; Eritrean government is organising a campaign to increase blood donations, says Radio Erena.
- Eritrea released 28 Jehovah’s witnesses after 26 years of incarceration. Meanwhile, hundreds of Christians and Muslims are still held in prison in Eritrea due to their religious beliefs.
- Former Eritrean Minister of Defense, Mesfin Hagos, relates that “in the run up to the current conflict, a large number of Ethiopian elite units had slowly been trickled into Eritrea as part of a security pact between Abiy and Eritrean president Isaias Afwerki.” He states that: “Hidden from public view at an ad hoc base in Gherghera, in the outskirts of Asmara,” in Eritrea, “these units were expected to be the hammer and the Northern Command the anvil to strike out of existence the TPLF.” According to Hagos the “TPLF preempted this scheme in what it called ‘anticipatory defense’, which forced both Abiy and Isaias to improvise leading to the eruption of conflict.”

Human Rights (as confirmed per 07 Dec)

- Unconfirmed reports that first UN observers have arrived in Mekelle.
- Editor of the Addis Standard states that the earlier reported massacre in Mai Kadra has claimed the lives of more than 600 civilians and no certainty of the perpetrators.
- Wounded refugees from Hitsats camp under international protection deported back against their will to Eritrea, speaking of killings in the camps when it came under control of Ethiopian federal forces and Eritrean military.
- Campaigns #SayNoToWar, #StopWarInEthiopia, #StopWarInTigray, #TigrayGenocide ask international community to protect refugees in Sudan from repatriation to Ethiopia against their will.
- Verified reports of ethnic profiling of Tigrayans in Ethiopia, organised and sanctioned by the state.

Military situation (as confirmed per 07 Dec)

- Reports from Tigray that an Ethiopian Federal government fighter jet crashed around Zana (near Shire, Tigray). This would be the third jet downed by the TPLF. (*unconfirmed*)
- Spokesperson for the TPLF, Getachew Reda, states that Tigray forces are in the rural areas and are defending their positions.

Situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 07 Dec)

- Oromia's ruling Prosperity Party (PP) leader Taye Dandaa warns against annexation of land by force, stating that any border issues should be resolved through the Identity and Boundary Commission.

Situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 07 Dec)

- Tigray regional President accuses Eritrean forces of mass looting. There have been numerous reports of Eritrean soldiers looting cities and dismantling entire factories and university departments. These are reportedly then transported to Eritrea.
- Report that the Ethiopian security forces seized the Dimtsi Weyane station headquarters in Mekelle. The Oromia Broadcasting Network shows the abandoned studios, recording rooms, and offices.
- Large gatherings have been taking place in several Tigrayan border towns. These are reportedly Amhara pushing for unification with the Ethiopian Amhara region.
- BBC newshour has reported that aid has been delayed due to ongoing fighting.
- A spokesman for the TPLF has claimed that tens of thousands have been killed during the conflict.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 07 Dec)

- Tigray: UN remains out of contact with Eritrean refugee camps in Tigray, and says that it continues to receive "disturbing reports" regarding the camps. World Food Program is trying to locate 50,000 refugees in the camps who were receiving food aid.
- UNHCR states that 48,000 refugees have now crossed into Sudan and that 12,000 have been relocated to Um Raquba refugee camp.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 19 - 08 December

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Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

International dimension (as confirmed per 08 Dec)

- A UN security team trying to visit the Shimelba refugee camp in Tigray, where refugees are located under international protection, was denied access and shot at and briefly detained. The situation around the camps is unsafe.
- UN staff in Mekelle reportedly harassed by security forces.
- The UN secretary-general, Antonio Guterres, has engaged in “an active dialogue” with Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, including a phone conversation on Monday, and “is very concerned about the current situation.”
- Protest against the war planned in front of the Houses of Parliament in the UK for today (8 Dec.)
- The European Council has adopted a resolution to impose targeted sanctions on people and entities responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity and other serious abuses such as torture and slavery, extrajudicial killings and arbitrary detention.
- Ethiopian PM Abiy Ahmed is meeting his Kenyan counterpart, Uhuru Kenyatta, to inspect construction of the new Lamu port, an anchor project of the Lapsset infrastructural undertaking, against the backdrop of recent border tensions.
- South African President and AU Chairperson Ramaphosa discusses the conflict of the Ethiopian Tigray region among African Peace challenges to the ANC National Executive Committee.
- Confirmation from Asmara that it is flooded with cars, university equipment, lab equipment, pharmaceutical equipment and equipment from factories, including a textile factory, and food, brought from Tigray as loot by the Eritrean military.
- Editor of Addis Standard, Tsedale Lemma, questions the background and legitimacy of the peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea which was not approved by the Ethiopian parliament.

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 08 Dec)

- Launched in 2012, Lapsset will also include an oil pipeline that will run from the Kenyan Port of Lamu to Addis Ababa, as part of infrastructure projects to improve connectivity and bilateral trade.
- Al Fashaga triangle disputed Sudan-Ethiopian border and farmlands, occupied by Sudanese army.

Military situation (as confirmed per 08 Dec)

- Report of fighting between Tigray Defence Forces and Ethio-Eritrean joint forces for the past 3 days near a small town called Werk Amba, north west of Abi Addi, one of the major towns in Tigray.

- Reported on social media that UAE drones bombed civilian locations in Abi Addi indiscriminately.

Human Rights (as confirmed per 08 Dec)

- Tigray doctor states in a text message that they are working with a severe lack of basic equipment, including lack of light, fuel, food, gloves and antibiotics. Their ambulance was taken by soldiers.
- A doctor arriving in Mekelle has stated that at least 27 people have died, including a 4 year old child.

Situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 08 Dec)

- Radio Erena reported that over 4,000 Eritrean refugees have left their camps in Tigray and are moving towards other Ethiopian regions after repeated attacks by militias.
- PM Abiy Ahmed has visited a hospital with ENDF wounded forces.
- Parents from students in Mekelle University worry about the fate of their children from whom they have received no news due to the lockdown.

Situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 08 Dec)

- Ethiopian and Eritrean troops plan a massive door-to-door operation in Mekelle in the coming days to assert control.
- Deputy VC of Mekelle University asks universities for support to a call for cease-fire and to rapidly organise efficient humanitarian aid to Tigray after the university was bombed by Ethiopian air force.
- A hate campaign is being organised against faculty staff of the university of Mekelle. This is primarily being conducted by Amhara Mass Media and through facebook.
- Reported that thousands of refugees are sheltering in TPLF held areas.
- Internet and telecommunication lines are still down in Tigray region despite it being 10 days since the government has declared victory.
- Elected leader of Tigray region, Debretsion, states Eritrean forces took part in mass lootings: "They have taken laboratory equipment, computers, books. They have gone to one factory of medicine".
- Many obstacles in the way of providing aid and relief to the region. Looting and lawlessness has made it too dangerous to dispatch convoys according to officials. Reportedly a convoy was stopped at the Tigrayan border.
- There is a critical lack of supplies in the whole region. Officials report that in Shire, people were turned away as there was nothing to give.
- Humanitarian aid workers affected by the shortages of supplies in Mekelle.
- Shortages of basic commodities, including food, water, fuel and cash reported in Mekelle.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 08 Dec)

- France provides €1 million for humanitarian aid to refugees in Sudan.
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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 20 - 09 December

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

International dimension (as confirmed per 09 Dec)

- Eritrean organisations call for an international day of action to stop the war in the Horn of Africa. They call for a “protest against war and forced recruitment” on Human Rights Day, 10 December - against forced recruitment of Eritreans into the indefinite national service and the war in Tigray.
- Report that Eritrean citizens in Asmara refuse to buy the looted goods offered for sale which are brought into the country from Ethiopia.
- US and other national diplomats back claims that Eritrean soldiers are fighting in Tigray, stating that there is no doubt anymore that Eritrean soldiers are fighting in Tigray. The diplomatic sources believe that “thousands” of Eritrean soldiers are engaged in the conflict.
- The Eritrean and Ethiopian governments continue to deny the involvement of Eritrea.
- Three separate United Nations security teams evaluating the situation in Ethiopia’s Tigray region have observed troops wearing Eritrean uniforms moving in the area, according to people familiar with the matter. These were spotted in different parts of Tigray. Notably in Mekelle, Shire, as well as on the Ethiopian side of the border with Eritrea.
- Three UN teams trying to enter Tigray stopped; in Humera, Bahir Dar and Dessie. These teams led by OCHA included representatives from WHO, WFP, UNICEF and other UN agencies.
- Ethiopian government admits shooting at and detaining a UN team in Tigray. Spokesman said the UN staff should not have been there and went through 2 roadblocks. The observers were reportedly on their way to check on Eritrean refugees in a camp under international protection.
- UNHCR Chief, Filippo Grandi, states that regaining access to refugees and others in need in Tigray is urgent and critical for UNHCR and humanitarian organizations.
- Norwegian Refugee Council is deeply concerned by significant constraints to aid delivery despite an agreement with the Ethiopian government last week.
- The Norwegian government announced that it will reconsider the asylum status of Eritreans who participated in celebrations of the National Service system of conscription.
- Ethiopian authorities have rejected independent investigations into the massacres committed during the conflict. An Ethiopian official, Redwan Hussein, stated that “[t]he investigation that is being undertaken by the government will be up to international and national standards.”
- The Secretary General of the UN publishes a statement raising concern about the situation in Tigray. Guterres urges the quick restoration of the Rule of Law. The UN is committed to supporting the

African Union initiative and mobilizing the full capacity of the UN to provide aid and relief to populations affected.

- Eritrean envoys sent to Sudan for a diplomatic visit.

Military situation (as confirmed per 09 Dec)

- There are reports that Tigray Defense Forces have conducted an operation in Shire and Sheraro towns on 9 December and that they have taken over control from ENDF and Eritrean soldiers.

Human Rights (as confirmed per 09 Dec)

- Families have stated that refugees have been kidnapped from camps in Tigray and have been forcefully returned to Eritrea.
- Ethiopian authorities resist giving in to growing international pressure to allow outside independent investigations of the massacres that have taken place in Mai-Kadra in Tigray Regional State and across other parts of the country.
- EU Commissioner of Humanitarian Affairs, Janez Lenarčič, calls for independent investigation into the massacres in Tigray, after his visit to the Um Raquba refugee camp in Sudan, hosting ten thousand refugees from the conflict.
- Elected leaders of the Tigray Regional State state that they welcome international investigations into the massacres committed during the conflict.

Situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 09 Dec)

- *Unconfirmed* report that Eritrean refugees who fled the camps for refugees under international protection in Tigray who arrived in Addis Ababa have been put into detention camps.

Situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 09 Dec)

- FANA reports that the interim government of Tigray has started to have discussions with stakeholders in Mekelle and encourages citizens to actively participate.
- Pictures showing significant destruction in the Tigray Region. Social media report Zenith hair oil factory in Shire, Tigray, is completely destroyed.
- ICRC reports that people in Mekelle, Tigray, are facing a shortage of clean water.
- Concern over fate of scholars from Mekelle University, the third ranking university of Ethiopia, as communication black-out continues in Tigray.
- Journalists have not been permitted to travel to Ethiopia's Tigray region by the Ethiopian government, despite requesting access.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 09 Dec)

- 50,000 refugees have fled into Sudan.
- Thousands of Eritrean refugees have left camps in Tigray to head to the South, away from the fighting. Refugees that remain in Adi Harush camp state that they stay up at night to prevent attacks and abductions.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 21 - 10 December

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Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

International dimension (as confirmed per 10 Dec)

- EU High Representative, Josep Borrell, states that in “talks with Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, of Sudan, in his capacity as Chairperson of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and with Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, I renewed the EU’s support to any initiative of IGAD and the African Union to address the situation” in Ethiopia.
- Catholic Bishops in Africa have, under the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM), joined Bishops in Eastern Africa in voicing concerns about the violent conflict in Ethiopia’s Tigray region, urging for “immediate laying down of arms”, “All parties in the conflict to resolve their differences amicably through open dialogue, and in a spirit of brotherhood, respect, understanding, and reconciliation” and “local, national, and international security personnel and agents to safeguard the lives of all the people, especially civilians, and to restore peace in the region.”
- United Nations security teams reported observing troops wearing Eritrean uniforms in the Tigray region. Three persons stated that the UN teams had seen Eritrean respectively in western Tigray, en route to the town of Shire; in the capital of Mekelle and west of the city; and on the roads that lead from Eritrea’s border to the northern Tigray towns of Adwa and Adrigat.
- UN SG Guterres states there is no proof of the presence of Eritrean troops inside Ethiopia: “I confronted the (Ethiopian) prime minister with that question, and he guaranteed to me that they have not entered the Tigrayan territory, that the only area where they are is the area that corresponded to the disputed territory between the two countries that in the peace agreement was decided to give back to Eritrea.”
- In a letter to Ethiopian students, a representative of the Ethiopian Embassy in Belgium states that “at this moment, the situation is far from over as the most wanted leaders of the TPLF remain fugitives.”
- UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, states fears that “the situation in Ethiopia is exceedingly worrying and volatile and – as I had warned – is spiraling out of control, with appalling impact on civilians” and voicing concerns on Ethnic profiling of Tigrayans.
- US Ambassador to Ethiopia, Tibor Nagy states: “we strongly urge all parties to safeguard humanitarian workers in and around Ethiopia’s Tigray region. We continue to urge immediate and unhindered humanitarian access throughout Tigray to ensure food and medical supplies quickly reach those in need.”
- International media are quoting the Ethiopian government, stating “it doesn’t need a babysitter” as a concern grows that support may be needed to calm the situation and create a humanitarian corridor.

- During a two-day visit to Kenya, PM Abiy challenges President Uhuru to work on the security of the Kenyan northern region. He states this will help transform it, given its potential and encouraging communities along the border to help security forces deal with armed groups from Al Shabab and fighters from the Oromo Liberation Front, believed to be operating in the area.

Regional Situation (as confirmed per 10 Dec)

- The Somali PM commits to elections after the parliamentary elections deadline was missed on 1 december.

Situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 10 Dec)

- An Ethiopian opposition party, Oromo Federalist Congress, says it will find it “extremely hard” to take part in coming elections in Ethiopia under existing conditions. It says that many of its members are in jail or restricted and that offices remain inaccessible to them. They urge for more democratic elections.
- Media Fact check organisation concerned about use of social media for disinformation purposes by Ethiopian government.
- Ethiopian diplomats warn against the wide-spread campaign of “misinformation and fake news” stating: “the current operation is neither a civil war nor directed against innocent Tigrayans. The Federal Government is trying to bring to justice treasonous TPLF leaders.”
- Further evidence of ethnic profiling emerging as business owners of Tigray origins are being harassed in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in a leaked memo with proof of profiling and targeting specific businesses of Tigray origins.
- The Addis Standard Editor, Medihane Ekubamichael, was released from prison. He was arrested earlier in November and charged with “attempts to dismantle the constitution.”

Situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 10 Dec)

- One million out of six million residents have fled their homes in Tigray as a result of the conflict.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 10 Dec)

- Ethiopia SOEFactCheck twitter sends: “We have received credible intelligence that TPLF [Tigray People’s Liberation Front] operatives have infiltrated refugees fleeing into Sudan to carry out missions of disinformation. We caution media entities & international organisations to thoroughly investigate & verify information they receive.” Retweeted by PM Abiy, government accounts and “influencer” account, with more than half a million followers. Analysts concerned about disinformation campaign.
- Qatar Charity (QC) joins relief interventions to shelter Ethiopian refugees fleeing the conflict in Tigray region to Sudan in the Um Rakuba camp in Qallabat in eastern Sudan.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 22 - 11 December

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

International dimension (as confirmed per 11 Dec)

- Two US senators, a democrat and a republican, have introduced a resolution to impose sanctions on any political or military officials found to be responsible for human rights violations during the month of conflict in Ethiopia's northern Tigray region.
- Reports that the United States believes Eritrean soldiers are in Tigray and that this is confirmed by satellite images.
- TV images showing evidence of eritrean soldiers in Tigray.
- Experts warn that weakening of the Ethiopian military presence in Somalia is a risk factor, as the terror group Al-Shabaab can gain influence there again during the sensitive pre-election period for 2021.
- Report that a boat carrying weapons for Al-Shabaab has arrived in the coastal village of Durduri near Lasqoray in Somalia on Tuesday night.
- The US Department of Defence says it will still be able to conduct drone and strike operations in Somalia after its withdrawal of soldiers on the ground, ordered by the Trump administration.
- The US military says it conducted two airstrikes on Al Shabaab in the vicinity of Jilib 112KM south to Kismaayo in the Lower Juba region on Thursday, stating it killed 8 Al-Shabaab fighters and wounded 2.
- Wim Zwijnenburg, an expert on disarmament for PAX, said there is no evidence that UAE drones strikes are being carried out in Tigray. He recognises there are UAE drones based in Eritrea.
- Flemish Parliament (Belgium) asks for urgent diplomatic action on the conflict in Tigray to avoid famine.

Situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 11 Dec)

- PM Abiy Ahmed has visited Lamu Port, a component of the South Sudan Ethiopia land corridor. He hopes to push for further economic integration. Several analysts have pointed out the PM is trying to change the topic from the war towards economic issues. He has recently undertaken multiple trips to economically important areas. Ethiopia has also announced closer economic ties to Algeria.
- The Ethiopian military has said that it has rescued a thousand officers and soldiers who were imprisoned following early attacks on ENDF bases in early november.
- The Ethiopian military has said it has captured 370 soldiers in the region of Oromo. These fighters are affiliated with the OLF, a movement which has been fighting against the government for decades. Reportedly 183 of those captured were TPLF operatives providing aid to the OLF.

- Oromo Federalist Congress (OFC) says that conditions for the party to participate in Ethiopian elections include: (i) leadership and rank and file members are released immediately, (ii) its offices are reopened and (iii) its members are granted the right to operate in peace in order to prepare for the election.
- New York Times reports on the involvement of rival ethnic militia groups in the conflict in Tigray, including Fano, which is a militia from the Amhara ethnic group. Along with Amhara regional government security forces, Fano took part in the intervention in Tigray.

Human Rights (as confirmed per 11 Dec)

- The New York Times has reported testimonies of Ethiopian refugees in Sudan. They tell stories about ethnic massacres in Tigray. They mostly blame government aligned militias.
- Report that 10,000 Eritrean refugees in Tigray have been forcefully returned to Eritrea.

Situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 11 Dec)

- In an interview with the BBC, two Tigray-based ENDF soldiers report that their base was attacked by TPLF forces on 3 november. The battle lasted 11 hours after which they surrendered. The TPLF transported them to the border. The soldiers say that their wounded were not treated.
- State owned Ethio-Telecom has blamed the outages of communications in Tigray on outside sabotage. A different state run newspaper has said that the saboteurs wore TPLF uniforms.
- The Ethiopian ministry of Peace has announced that 1.2 million tons of food aid has arrived in Mekelle. The ministry says this is part of wider efforts by the government to provide aid to the region.
- Several foreign factories in Tigray shut down operations. Already hard hit by the Coronavirus, many of these have had to lay off workers and cut wages. The instability in the region and Ethiopia, even before the recent war, has led to multiple businesses scaling down or ceasing operations.
- The Ethiopian electricity company announces that access to electricity will return to Tigray by 13 Dec.
- An International Rescue Committee staff member has been killed in a refugee camp near Shire, the organisation has said.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 11 Dec)

- The Sudan Commissioner for Refugees, protection Office, states that Eritrean refugees who are currently in Tigray will maintain their refugee status automatically if they make it to Sudan.
- UNHCR: forceful repatriation of refugees from Sudan to Ethiopia is a violation of international law.
- Resettling of refugees in Sudan to a new camp close to the Amhara Ethiopia border will only be done on a voluntary basis, UNHCR states, after concerns are raised on security of refugees in the camps.
- UNHCR is deploying more equipment to Sudan to accommodate the new influx of Ethiopian refugees.
- Save the Children concerned about the vulnerability of child refugees in Sudan. Hundreds have been arriving alone. It is hard to identify them and they are at risk of human trafficking. Protecting them requires specialist care, which is often hard to provide with the limited resources available.
- Report on social media that Eritrean refugees in a detention center in Addis Ababa are lacking food, water, and other facilities and the centre looks like prison.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 23 - 12 December

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Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

International dimension (as confirmed per 12 Dec)

- The US State Department states it has credible reports on the presence of Eritrean troops in Tigray. Eritrea's involvement would confirm that the conflict is regional. "This is a grave development," a US State Department spokesperson said in an emailed statement. "We urge that any such troops be withdrawn immediately." Both Eritrea and Ethiopia deny the presence.
- Humanitarian workers killed. EU Commissioner Lenarčič condemns "the killing of four humanitarian workers in a refugee camp in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, including three staff members from the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and one from International Rescue Committee (IRC)."
- US House Foreign Affairs Committee McCaul, Engel, Bass & Smith respond to reports that a UN convoy came under fire: "...the situation on the ground is getting worse. Lack of security protections and opaque approval processes are blocking critical humanitarian assessment teams and preventing desperately needed food and supplies from reaching displaced populations. We call on the Government of Ethiopia to ensure safe and unfettered humanitarian access without delay. Humanitarian aid cannot be politicized."
- The UK and Denmark state they are deeply concerned about the death of the DRC and IRC staff that has been killed in Tigray. They call on aid workers to be protected at all times.
- Ethiopia's government states it is returning Eritrean refugees to camps they have fled in the northern region of Tigray, a move that alarms the United Nations refugee agency UNHCR.
- Eritrean organisation Arbi Harnet (Freedom Friday) states 300 Eritrean refugees who fled the fighting in Tigray, including from the refugee camps under international protection, were detained at the offices of IOM in the area of Bole in Addis and have been threatened with forced return to Eritrea. The process is presented as voluntary return and they are being held in the voluntary return registration centre of IOM. In a message smuggled out the refugees have asked for help to stop this.
- Reported that the Ethiopian government has seized control of one of the IOM refugee offices. This is reportedly being used to return Eritrean refugees back to the camps in Tigray.
- According to online sources, some refugees tried to run from the IOM center, and were caught and badly beaten and forced to return to the center by the security personnel.
- IOM confirms that "one of three IOM centres in Addis Ababa was taken over by the Ethiopian Government's Agency for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) on 3 December. IOM has had no management authority, oversight or involvement in any activities undertaken by the authorities in the centre since that time."

- UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi states he has received an “overwhelming number of disturbing reports of Eritrean refugees in Tigray being killed, abducted and forcibly returned to Eritrea.” He adds “If confirmed, these actions would constitute a major violation of international law.”
- Babar Baloch, UNHCR Spokesman, repeated the joint UN call for all parties to “allow freedom of movement to affected civilians seeking assistance, safety and security within the Tigray region or outside the affected areas”. “This includes the right to cross international borders to seek asylum”, he told journalists in Geneva.
- UN OCHA states that food rations for displaced people in Tigray have run out and reiterates an urgent call for unconditional and safe humanitarian access to the affected regions.
- Ethiopia State of Emergency Fact Check states that Eritrean refugees in the camps in Tigray face “no direct threats.”
- President of the International Federation of the Red Cross states he is deeply concerned about the situation in Tigray: lack of access to civilians, hospitals without water and electricity, lack of medicines.
- Amnesty International states aid must be allowed into refugee camps: “we are on the brink of a humanitarian crisis and federal authorities are making it worse”.

Military situation (as confirmed per 12 Dec)

- Alert from generally reliable Twitter source: bombardments in Tembien, Tigray, most probably to destroy heavy artillery, which is known to be present there; Diplomats in Addis Ababa have no confirmation, there are multiple reliable sources but no confirmation from the ground in Tigray as due to shut down sources in the region are mostly unavailable.
- The Federal Police Commission in Ethiopia has issued arrest warrants for 40 former and defected senior members of the Ethiopia Air Force, Defense Forces and police officers. The list includes Lt. Gen. Tsadikan G/Tinsay, former, retired army chief of staff. They are suspected of coordinating the kidnapping of ENDF members and members of the federal police on November 04 by taking mission from “Tigray-based anti-peace elements”.
- The TPLF has said that it is continuing to fight on multiple fronts (Reuters).

Human Rights (as confirmed per 12 Dec)

- Online messages of threats against relatives as punishment by association in Ethiopia, a practice well documented from within Eritrea, according to experts.

Situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 12 Dec)

- The Ethiopian government has announced that on December 8th, 44 trucks arrived in Shire carrying food. Similarly 30 trucks arrived in Mekelle; more trucks are being dispatched with medical supplies.
- The Federal Ethiopian Ministry of Peace announcement that 1.2 million tonnes of food aid, including wheat, had arrived in Mekelle is unrealistic, state experts.
- The Ethiopian Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) claims that the TPLF has looted and destroyed the coordination office of the refugee camps in Shire. Files and materials were reportedly destroyed.

Situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 12 Dec)

- The Addis Standard has said that Lidetu Ayalew has been released from police custody. The Ethiopian politician had been held since July 24th.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 24 - 13 December 2020

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#). Key information (in addition to what is already widely published)

Military situation (as confirmed per 13 Dec)

- Bombardment of civilians and areas of TDF suspected bases were reported using drones and fighter jets around Central fronts of Tigray.
- Reports of three convoys of military trucks carrying soldiers and three trucks which were heading to supply fuel to Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF) have been destroyed by Tigray Defence Forces around Mayichaw, the capital of Southern Zone of Tigray.
- Alerts on frequent bombing of Tembien (Tigray) with increasing number of confirmations, speaking of indiscriminate attacks, taking place “nonstop all day today involving a huge number of fighter jets and artillery firepower”
- Massacre reported in Tembien, a small town of Guya, around 30km west of Abyadi town where more than 20 civilians are slaughtered by the military according to reports.
- Soldiers brought by helicopter to Tembien are terrorising civilians to give up the location of the elected President of the Tigray regional government, reported.

International dimension (as confirmed per 13 Dec)

- The U.S. State Department warns any Eritrean forces in Ethiopia to withdraw, after finding reports of their presence there to be ‘credible’.
- Mark Lowcock, the U.N. under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs states that the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies need immediate and unfettered access to scale up urgently needed assistance and protection for vulnerable civilians, and to get safe passage to humanitarian workers and supplies to the affected region, in line with the globally agreed principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and operational independence.
- UNHCR Envoy Vincent Cochetel states that “killing aid workers is a war crime with no statutory limitations.” after the killing of four aid workers in a refugee camp in Tigray.
- Confirmed that two injured teenage Eritrean refugee boys, who were abducted by Eritrean troops from the Hitsats refugee camp in Tigray - where refugees were under international protection, and taken back to Eritrea died two days ago at a clinic in Glass - Anseba (Eritrea).

- The young woman and athlete, Letesenbet Gidey, originally from Tigray, world record holder of 5,000 meters was supposed to participate in the half marathon that took place in Valencia, Spain, last Sunday. Gidey never reached her destination.
- Damage from the war (as confirmed per 13 Dec)
- report of serious impact on woods and forests around the refugee camps in Sudan where 50.000 new refugees have arrived who use firewood for cooking.
- Pictures of serious damage appear from Aksum.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 13 Dec)

- ICRC reports that a convoy has reached Mekelle, Ethiopia, “carrying medicines and relief items that will be donated to healthcare facilities in urgent need of supplies” to treat the more than 400 injured and other patients hospitalized at Ayder, the main hospital.
- The International Rescue Committee states it is still trying to confirm details around the killing of a colleague in the Hitsats refugee camp in Shire town, the base of aid operations.
- An envoy of buses carrying over 400 Eritreans who had fled from refugee camps and other places in Tigray to Addis Ababa are deported back to Tigray. However, water, food and other goods are missing in the camps which have been the location of heavy fighting.

Ethnic profiling in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 13 Dec)

- Ethnic profiling of Tigrians in Addis Ababa traffic police management, Addis Ababa police as well as federal police was reported, including arrest of those suspected and others were told they will be forcibly sent to military training (Estimated to be 200).
- Ethnic profiling, harassment and arrest of family members of former and current TPLF leaders reported in Addis Ababa, incl family of Ambassador Seyoum Mesfin and Sekoture Getachaw.
- Ethnic profiling of Tigrians living in low cost government owned houses in Addis Ababa.
- NYT reports that ethnic Tigrayans in Ethiopia are “treated like criminal suspects and subjected to various forms of discrimination, harassment and abuse by government officials.” Reports include “being detained without charges, put under house arrest, and barred from traveling outside the country. Tigrayans say they have had their businesses shut down, homes ransacked and money extorted by security officials.”
- Ethiopian Human Rights Commissioner, Daniel Bekele states that human rights issues have been worsening across Ethiopia, because of hatred and dispute among political actors.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 13 Dec)

- Reported from within Tigray: serious problem of lack of water.
- Serious looting still ongoing from shops in Mekelle, perpetrated by Amharic militia and Eritreans as well as poverty stricken people benefiting from the lawless situation.

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Links of interest

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/12/world/africa/Ethiopia-Tigray-ethnic.html>
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/12/11/ethiopia-tigray-un-attack-aid-civilians/>
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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 25 - 14 December 2020

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Military situation (as confirmed per 14 Dec)

- Further confirmation that fighting is ongoing around Ala'isa and Hagere Selam, Tigray.
- The road between Mekelle and Adigrat is interrupted, travelling is impossible.
- Reports from the ground of severe bombardments in Tembien, Tigray, by the ENDF.
- The TPLF is reportedly conscripting in Mekelle.
- Refugees arriving in Sudan give witness reports of the presence of the Eritrean military in the refugee camps in Tigray (Ethiopia). A witness reports: "Some of the soldiers were Eritreans, some of them were (Ethiopian) federal soldiers." Referring to the attack on the refugee camp in Tigray, he states: "They were shooting at all people. All -- women, men, children." (AFP)

International dimension (as confirmed per 14 Dec)

- UN Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Ms. Pramila Patten, and the Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect, Ms. Karen Smith, expressed concern over escalating ethnic tensions in Ethiopia and recent military clashes in Tigray, and killing of many civilians.
- Norwegian Refugee Council Secretary General Jan Egeland calls for more action and less words to provide humanitarian support in Tigray.
- PM of Sudan visited Ethiopia. Visit lasted 2 hours, although the Ethiopian PM office had announced it would last 2 days. Sudanese PM offer to mediate the war rejected by Ethiopia.
- The Ethiopian House of the People Representatives Board accused Sudan of helping the TPLF and perpetrating attacks on civilians.
- Non-Tigrayan students from Mekelle University were evacuated to Addis Ababa via Asmara (Eritrea). The non-Tigrayan students left Mekelle by bus and were driven to Eritrea, Asmara, for further onward journeys.
- During the bombing of Mekelle, 29 November, the Eritrean government helped Adigrat students travel to Ethiopia via Asmara airport. News site showed videos of students.
- UNHCR Filippo Grandi is "deeply alarmed" about the situation of Eritrean refugees in Tigray, stating: "Over the last month we have received an overwhelming number of disturbing reports of Eritrean refugees in Tigray being killed, abducted and forcibly returned to Eritrea."

- Eritrean refugees in Tigray left without support as most UNHCR staff were evacuated for security reasons. Ethiopia restricted access to Tigray. Humanitarian workers have been killed.
- William Davison, ICG, states Eritrea may no longer want Ethiopia to give protection to Eritrean refugees, seen as dissidents or deserters from indefinite national conscription in Eritrea.
- Analysis published at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum concludes the necessity of Foreign governments and human rights organizations to “ follow the lead of the African Union to support peace processes between the central government and regional groups and condemn violence against civilians” in an effort to decrease the risk of atrocities in Ethiopia.
- Eritrean artist Eseyas Debesay presents a song celebrating the demise of the TPLF.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 14 Dec)

- The number of refugees that arrived in Sudan from Tigray has passed 50,000.
- Refugees arriving in Sudan give witness reports of fighting in the refugee camps in Tigray: "Suddenly soldiers came to our camp and they started shooting," Kheder Adam told AFP in a Sudanese refugee camp. "The situation was very serious. There was a lot gunfire."
- Eritrean refugees separated from their families in camps in Tigray are arriving in Sudan .

Human Rights in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 14 Dec)

- Al Jazeera published accounts of survivors of the Mai Kadra massacre. The survivors recount TPLF militias and police killing non-Tigrayans. In refugee camps in Sudan, other refugees say that they had been targeted for being Tigrayan. AP interviewed both ethnic Tigrayans and ethnic Amhara, and both say that they were being targeted. Some Tigrayan refugees say they recognised neighbours committing atrocities. AP says it is possible that both sides took part in massacres in Mai Kadra and surrounding areas. The UN calls for an independent investigation.
- The Early Warning Project, a project that assesses the risk of mass atrocities, estimates that “there is a 6.5%, or approximately 1 in 15, chance of a new mass killing beginning in Ethiopia in 2020 or 2021. Ethiopia ranks 9th highest-risk among 162 countries.”

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 14 Dec)

- Increase phone traffic with some places in Tigray. The network in Tembien is still shut down.
- Ethiopia has started a campaign to disarm civilians in Tigray. The newly installed administration has called on all Tigrayans that own weapons to bring these weapons to security services.
- Looting is still taking place around Tigray. Reportedly a dialysis machine was taken out of Mekelle hospital. Twenty young people attempting to stop this were shot.
- Looting from shopkeepers continues and leads to exorbitant prices for food in Mekelle.
- PM Abiy visits Mekelle, reporting that telecom and electricity are being reinstalled.
- There is no electricity and no fuel for generators, according to citizens’ communication.

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Links of interest

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTZCFtXBXCc&feature=youtu.be>

https://amp.france24.com/en/live-news/20201212-new-exile-for-eritrean-refugees-fleeing-ethiopia?__twitter_impression=true&s=04

<https://earlywarningproject.ushmm.org/countries/ethiopia>

<https://www.ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/blog/violence-musicians-murder-risk-of-atrocity-crimes-ethiopia>

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 26 - 15 December

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Military situation (as confirmed per 15 December)

- Reported that fighting in Tigray is ongoing in Hagere Selam, between Wukro and Adigrat, Samre, Dogu'a and Kolla Tembien, May Tsemre, and around Maychew.
- Ethiopian Government forces say they seized 140 trucks filled with explosives and military supplies.
- Experts analysing satellite pictures believe it may be likely that thousands of households are affected by plots and homesteads having been burnt.
- Systematic ethnic cleansing reported by an observer on the ground, reporting ghost towns in Tigray.

International dimension (as confirmed per 15 December)

- President Hamdok of Sudan, chair of IGAD, announces an emergency meeting of IGAD.
- Hamdok, during his visit to Addis Ababa, was accompanied by Sudanese security officials, and reportedly planned "to present his concerns about threats to Sudan's security along its border with Tigray" during the visit to Addis Ababa. The visit was cut short.
- President Bihi from Somaliland to visit Nairobi at the invitation of Kenyan President Kenyatta. Expectation that Kenya could offer Somaliland recognition.
- Catholic Church and elders in Eritrea have asked Eritreans not to purchase (cheap) goods originating from Tigray. This follows after many reports of heavy plundering in Tigray, especially by Eritrean forces. Many of these were transported to Eritrea.
- Goods looted from Tigray are stocked outside of Asmara, in Ashagol: a military area.
- Eritreans in diaspora state that relatives in Eritrea are forced to march in front of Ethiopian forces and are sandwiched between Tigray and Ethiopian federal allied forces in a war that is not theirs. Due to the indefinite national service they are forced to join the war involuntary.
- The United States has rescinded the designation of state sponsor of terrorism for Sudan.
- The UN Security Council has met to discuss the conflict in Tigray. The conversation was initiated by Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, the US, and the UK.
- At the UN SC, Belgium expressed its concern over the situation in Ethiopia and called for respect for humanitarian law and unhindered access of humanitarian workers to all areas.
- At the UN SC, Germany called for full and immediate humanitarian access in light of food shortages and "immense suffering". Safety of humanitarian workers is paramount.

- The UN Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect offer its support to Ethiopia to address hate speech and prevent incitement to violence in the country.

Human Rights (as confirmed per 15 December)

- Eritrean refugees that were forced to return to camps in Tigray have not arrived yet, despite having left Addis Ababa 3 days ago. They seem to have disappeared without communication.
- Ethnic profiling: Human Rights Watch reports that impact of conflict in Tigray is felt throughout Ethiopia by Tigrayans, including discrimination, arbitrary detentions, house searches, work suspensions and restrictions to travel.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 15 December)

- 1,000 Ethiopian refugees are living in extremely difficult conditions in Eastern Sudan. There are numerous difficulties with transportation of basic supplies such as food and water.
- Eritrean refugees under international protection in four camps in Tigray report they were shot at by Eritrean and Ethiopian troops.
- A female Eritrean refugee has died at Adi Harush camp, and two minors injured in the war.
- The Ethiopian government has rejected exit visas for 10 Eritrean refugees who completed all steps for relocation through IOM to Canada.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 15 December)

- Telephone lines to Mekelle (only) reinstated, but no internet, electricity, water, food.
- Further reports emerging of civilians killed in shelling of Mekelle. Al Jazeera published an account of a doctor in Mekelle during November. He witnessed 16 civilian deaths during the airstrikes on 28 Nov.
- Massacre reported on social media in which youth were killed whilst they were protecting the Saba leather factory and businesses against looting.
- No reliable information has been received about the fate of the Catholic Bishop Tesfaselassie Medhin and his priests from the Eparchy of Adigrat, Tigray, since the start of conflict.
- Professors and students at Mekelle University remain without communication.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 15 December)

- The Ambassador of Ethiopia to the EU has said that the lack of communication with Tigray was due to a cyberattack. She has since then retracted this statement and said instead that it was sabotage to the broadcasting station in Mekelle.
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Links of interest

<https://taz.de/Krieg-in-Aethiopien/!5736994/>

<https://twitter.com/RAbdiAnalyst/status/1338087150202576896?s=20>

<https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/whatsinblue/2020/12/ethiopia-tigray-discussion-of-the-humanitarian-situation-under-any-other-business.php>

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 27 - 16 December

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Military situation (as confirmed per 16 December)

- AFP reports civilians inside Tigray have said that the military has violently enforced a curfew. Many people have been killed by soldiers during the enforcement. Eritrean soldiers are said to be among the patrolling soldiers, in line with many reports from social media.
- Other testimonies involve ENDF forces carrying out violence, including extrajudicial killings, against civilian populations in Tigray. Several farmers, including a 15 year old boy, were reportedly shot after being accused of being members of the TPLF.
- The Ethiopian government has denied any claim that the military was involved in killings.
- Hundreds of civilians died in bombardements of Wukro and Tembien. Heavy fighting took place, heavy shelling has been reported. Bombardements are partly carried out by drones.
- Reportedly Eritrean soldiers are also wearing Ethiopian army uniforms.
- Kidnapping of wealthy Tigrayan business from Tigray by Eritrean Troops near Adigrat reported.
- Voices increasing on social media that systematic starvation is used as a weapon of war in Tigray and that UN Security Council needs to step in.
- Over 200 people have reportedly been killed in Wukro and the town is now deserted.
- The Women's League of the Benishangul Gumuz Regional State Prosperity Party (PP) requests that the federal government implements the ongoing "law enforcement operations in Tigray." Benishangul Gumuz regional state, Metekel Zone.
- Observer states "it is only a matter of time before the Amhara region lays territorial claim to the Benishangul Gumuz region."
- Experts warn of a protracted situation of instability, increased ethnic tensions between different ethnic groups in Ethiopia and the Eritrean involvement aggravating the situation.

International dimension (as confirmed per 16 December)

- Somalia breaks ties with Kenya, citing violations of Somali sovereignty by Kenya. It has instructed Somali diplomats to return and Kenyan diplomats to leave.
- Somalia-Kenya tension comes after relations tightened between Kenya and the Somali breakaway region of Somaliland after the Kenyan president hosted the leader of Somaliland.
- Demonstrations in Mogadishu, Somalia, demanding a fair election process in the country.

- IGAD meeting on 20 December will discuss the crisis in the region as well as COVID-19.
- Eritrea president Isaias meets with Saudi Arabia establishing a joint committee of common vision.
- US Administration signalling Eritrea should move out of Tigray.
- The European Union has stopped budgetary financial support, worth 90 million euros, to Ethiopia. The move came after a series of serious human rights abuses in the Tigray region.
- Estonia, delegation to UN SC expresses concern of the humanitarian situation in Tigray and “Human Rights violation must stop”. Stating violations must be investigated and perpetrators brought to justice.
- UK Government concerned about ethnically motivated attacks in Tigray and in Ethiopia.
- Over 120 African women from 20 African countries, including the Minister of Gender from Liberia, call for a women peacekeeping mission to halt the fighting, protect civilians and refugees.

Human Rights (as confirmed per 16 December)

- CORRECTION - Journalist Woldegiyorgis Teklay, journalist in Awlo media, is prevented from flying out from Addis Ababa without explanation.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 16 December)

- UNHCR reports over 63,000 people displaced internally, who have fled to other regions in Ethiopia and Sudan. The reported numbers are expected to increase as access to Tigray increases.
- Norwegian Refugee Council, together with the UNHCR, starts works to increase shelter for refugees in Sudan.
- Aid has arrived at Adi Harush refugee camp in Tigray. Before the conflict 30,000 refugees were housed in the camp.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 16 December)

- BBC’s Will Ross reports that few civil servants have returned to work following the Tigray interim administration’s call to start work again.
- Food and water shortages in Mekelle. Banks are closed.
- The UN states that 2.3 million children have been cut from aid in Tigray.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 16 December)

- Ethiopian Civil Aviation authority reopened airspace above Northern Ethiopia.
- The Head of the Ethiopian Election board has said that they will deploy 254,000 election facilitators, including up to 50,000 from last election.

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<https://www.indepthnews.net/index.php/the-world/horn-of-africa/4065-african-women-stress-the-need-for-a-horn-of-africa-peace-initiative>

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 28 - 17 December

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Military situation (as confirmed per 17 December)

- Heavy shelling is continuing in many villages in Tigray.
- Reported that male youth were forcibly recruited: “any males who tried to return home were taken to a local meeting and told by the Amhara forces that they would have to become soldiers.” Forced recruitment was earlier reported by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet.
- According to former Minister of Defense from Eritrea, Mesfin Hagos, Eritrea deployed in Tigray 17 infantry and mechanized divisions, a brigade and commando division and TPLF claims that Eritrean technical and combat units also participated (the 11th, 17th, 19th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 52nd, 53rd infantry and 42nd, 46th, 48th and 49th mechanized divisions and 2nd brigade and 52nd commando division).

International dimension (as confirmed per 17 December)

- The European Union asks: (1) full humanitarian access, (2) allowing refugees to seek refuge in neighbouring countries, (3) end discrimination and ethnic prosecution, (4) the establishment of a mechanism for independent investigation of human rights violations, (5) and the reestablishment of communication and media channels to Tigray.

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 17 December)

- The Somali Prime Minister is set to formally demand the removal of Kenyan troops from AMISOM. Reportedly he wants these replaced with Eritrean troops. Previously Ethiopian Tigray troops were taken off AMISOM. Eritrea has been accused in the past of training and supporting Al Shabaab. Observers warn the impact this re-arrangement may have on counter-terrorism policies.
- Somalia may stop issuing visas to Kenyan troops in AMISOM by the end of the month.
- In clashes at the Sudan-Ethiopia border, four Sudanese soldiers have been killed and twelve more wounded. The clash took place on territory claimed by Ethiopian farmers.
- PM Hamdok of Sudan deplores loss of military who “were ambushed by some Ethiopian forces and militias inside Sudanese territory”.
- Discussion on border issues between both countries was on the agenda of the Summit between Ethiopian PM Abiy and Sudan PM Hamdok last Sunday. Discussions on the border disputes are due to start next week in Khartoum according to the Sudan Tribune.
- Firefights are reported in Mogadishu as anti-government demonstrations are taking place. Local militias and security forces have been clashing.

Human Rights (as confirmed per 17 December)

- A Catholic bishop and several nuns and other missionary members, based in Adigrat, are missing.
- AFP reports that the Federal Ethiopian army separated men and women and executed a group of men in the village of Bisober in Southern Tigray on November 14th.
- Witnesses tell about executions of civilians in the Wukro area during November 25th -29th.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 17 December)

- Eritrean refugees who fled from Tigray refugee camps to Addis Ababa and were forced to return to Tigray have been taken to two camps (Mai Aini and Adi Harush), even if they lived in Shimelba and Hitsats camps before.
- There is a severe shortage of food and water in Mai Aini.
- Eritrean refugees are suffering from hunger and lack of medical assistance in Tigray refugee camps. Women are reportedly giving birth without medical assistance.
- Many families have been separated. Calls for an urgent family tracing program to support reunification and information regarding missing persons.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 17 December)

- In Tembien, Adi Qeweylo, Tigray, nine priests were killed by Federal Ethiopian and Eritrean troops.
- Reports of looting continue to come in. Eritrean soldiers are said to continue plundering valuable equipment from factories and universities. Videos have come out of what the descriptions claim are Eritrean trucks in Shire Endasilasie carrying loot back to Eritrea.
- Social media reports state that Eritrean soldiers may be engaged in “massive looting” of cultural artifacts. This could include raids on remote monasteries which keep ancient manuscripts. Ancient Christian religious manuscripts and texts may be in danger. Calls on UNESCO to investigate.
- Report that Al-Njesahi Mosque of Negash (Tigray) is looted; the oldest Muslim settlement in Africa.
- The UN has confirmed that 18 trucks have reached Eritrean refugee camps in Tigray.
- The UN states it does not have unhindered and full access to the region.
- More supplies, organised by the ICRC, have arrived in Mekelle.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 17 December)

- A number of Tigrayans who have spoken with the New Humanitarian have said that they have encountered growing ethnic profiling and discrimination. They are experiencing harassment on the streets, but have also been targeted by government investigations. The government has been acting against TPLF members, but non-members say that they have been targeted as well.
- The Ethiopian deputy PM, Demeke Mekonnen, has met with UN senior officials to discuss the latest developments in Tigray.
- CORRECTION: Journalist (as per yesterday’s report) not arrested but journey was delayed.

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<https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20201215-terrified-survivors-recount-attacks-on-civilians-in-tigray>
[Sudan Tribune](#)

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 29 - 18 December

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Evolving situation (as confirmed per 18 December)

- The Government of Sudan has accused Ethiopia of ambushing Sudanese troops on Wednesday. 4 soldiers died. Large military reinforcements deployed by Sudanese army along the border with Ethiopia after clashes in which Sudanese military were killed and wounded, reports Al Sharq newspaper.
- Nine priests killed in the Church in Adi Aweshi, Tembien, Tigray, by Ethiopian and Eritrean troops.
- Historic Al Nejashi Mosque (the first mosque in Africa) was first bombed and later looted by Ethiopian and Eritrean troops. Tigrayan sources are saying that people have died trying to protect the mosque.
- Reported that people have been killed in Oromo and Amhara region. The killings were carried out by separatist groups. It fuels fears that the conflict will spread to wider Ethiopia as ethnic tensions rise.
- Eritrean troops looted St. Mary, a Catholic church in Wukro, Tigray, and stole cars from the compound.
- The TPLF reportedly used tanks after the beginning of military actions on November 4th. ENDF forces were besieged in some camps for 10 days, after which they surrendered.
- Two doctors report heavy shelling at the start of the offensive. The shelling came from Eritrea, the border of which was 200 meters away. Following the shelling one doctor says that he counted 15 dead and 75 wounded. The second doctor says that they received 200 casualties of which 50 were dead on arrival. They mention a pattern of shelling, then arrival of government soldiers, followed by Amhara militias and special forces.
- The doctors also reported that they had to evacuate the wounded on trucks as it became too dangerous to stay. Subsequently they had to hide for two days as shooting and killings were taking place nearby. They eventually fled to Sudan.
- People have walked to Sudan covering distances of 300 km, reports BBC, and they saw many dead civilians on the way. A doctor states: "I have patients who say they saw Eritrean forces in Tigray who committed atrocities, burning houses and destroying farmland."
- Calls for investigation in the war crimes committed by all parties involved in the ground and air offensive which started on November 4th.
- Increasing concern of 'troll farm' attacks to silence reporting on the situation.

International dimension (as confirmed per 18 December)

- An official in Juba, South Sudan, states that the TPLF elected president, Debretsion Gebremichael, is seeking refuge there. It is understood that he has been in Juba for several weeks. When he arrived he

asked the President of South Sudan to mediate. The official also said that Debretsion did not meet with President el-Sisi of Egypt while in South Sudan and did not ask to meet him.

- Egypt has expressed full solidarity with Sudan after clashes on the Sudan - Ethiopian border, stating that “Khartoum has the right to defend its security and exercise sovereignty over its territories.”
- Chairperson of the Horn of Africa Civil Society Forum, Albaqir Mukhtar, appeals to Sudan Prime Minister Hamdok, chair of the IGAD, “to use all efforts and all diplomatic avenues to bring all parties of this conflict to the negotiating table as has been done in South Sudan and Somalia.”
- Ahead of the 20th December IGAD meeting the Horn of Africa Civil Society Forum urges Ethiopia PM Abiy Ahmed to accept IGAD as mediator in the regionalising conflict.
- Julia Cassell, the former Minister of Gender from Liberia, urges African leaders to create the conditions for peace on the ground. Cassell is joined by nearly 120 women from 20 countries across the African continent: Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, Benin, Niger, Ghana, Nigeria, DR Congo, Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Cameroon, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and South Africa.
- In the US, Black Lives Matter stands in solidarity with “all disenfranchised and displaced people in the Horn of Africa who are affected by violent conflict in Ethiopia.”

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 18 December)

- More than half of the over 65,000 refugees that arrived in Sudan are children and many have been separated from family members.
- The ICRC has released statistics on medical and first aid assistance provided in Tigray. These include over 2000 wounded, of which 550 were critical.
- UNHCR and partners working in four Tigray refugee camps with nearly 100,000 refugees continue to experience “challenges to access the camps and sustain the operational capacity on the ground.”
- Refugees in the four camps in Tigray urge aid to be provided to the other two camps Shimelba and Hitsats and they warn that camps are not yet safe.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 18 December)

- UN mission in Afar finds that “thousands of newly internally displaced people need water, sanitation and hygiene services, as well as medical supplies and care”.
- There continue to be reports of Eritrean soldiers looting in Tigray. Computers and other equipment was allegedly taken from a school operated by a Catholic mission.
- The United Nations has announced USD 36 million in emergency aid for civilians in Tigray. The majority will go to the purchase of medicine and food and civilian protection.
- Mekelle University announces a graduation ceremony. The online announcement is not matching the reality on the ground as many students have left and students and professors are still out of reach.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 18 December)

- Desert locusts threaten food security in Ethiopia and the wider region.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 30 - 19 December

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Regional situation (as confirmed per 19 December)

- Al Shabaab, Somalia's al Qaeda-allied Islamist extremist group, claims responsibility for a suicide attack in Mogadishu, Somalia, at a rally to be attended by PM Mohamed Hussein Roble, killing at least ten people. The commander of the 21st Division of the SNA General Abdiaziz Abdullahi Qooje and the commander of Danab forces in Galmudug Col Mukhtar Abdi Aden.
- Eritrea has in the past trained Al Shabaab and provided military support to it.
- Kenya and Somaliland have agreed to establish direct Kenya Airways flights between Nairobi and Hargeisa in Somaliland. This move comes shortly after an agreement was reached for Kenya to open a consulate in Hargeisa. The closer relations has created concern in Mogadishu and led to the severance of diplomatic relations between Kenya and Somalia.
- Sudanese military would be advancing towards the disputed Ethiopia-Sudan border area. The Sudanese Commander-in-Chief, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, also visited the area on Thursday.
- Eritrean soldiers have been digging trenches on the border with Ethiopia according to multiple reports. Sudanese authorities have been warning people to be cautious in the border area.
- The Sudanese government has accused the Ethiopian government of using artillery against Sudanese troops conducting operations in the border area. Tensions have been rising between the two countries in recent weeks after Sudan reoccupied land that it said was occupied by Ethiopian farmers. The government of Ethiopia has so far not commented on the matter.
- Special forces of Afar and Amahara have reportedly, for the last three days, been fighting each in Tigray
- A fire was detected during the night of Dec. 15-16 within Hagere Selam town in South Eastern Tigray. This appears to corroborate reports of ongoing attacks in the area.

International dimension (as confirmed per 19 December)

- Both the UK government and the EU received questions by parliamentarians about their respective roles in Ethiopia. In its response the British government said that Eritrea categorically denied the presence of troops in Tigray. They also denied forcing Eritrean refugees back to Eritrea.
- Egypt has condemned the border attack by Ethiopia on Sudan. The government has said that it stands in full solidarity with Sudan and calls for all measures to ensure that such events do not reoccur. Both Sudan and Egypt are in the middle of a struggle with Ethiopia, which is building a major new dam on the Blue Nile. Egypt and Sudan fear this could have severe impact downriver. The three countries have been in negotiations, however a compromise has not been reached yet.

- The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) demands that journalist Dawit Kebebe be released immediately. He has been held since november 30th for disseminating false information and tarnishing the image of the government but has not been charged. CPJ also calls for other journalists to be released.
- The Anglican Communion has expressed regret at the death toll in Tigray. The Secretary General has written in a letter that he is deeply concerned about the current situation in Tigray.

Human Rights (as confirmed per 19 December)

- Reportedly 37 civilians were killed by Eritrean troops in Mariam Dengelat. This follows further reports of Ethiopian ENDF soldiers shooting at unarmed civilians. Recent days has also seen the emergence of names of civilians killed in Tigray emerging, this includes an entire family in Adigrat
- On social media claims of four named priests and three civilians killed by troops (reportedly ENDF and Eritrean allied troops) in Zalambessa.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 19 December)

- Reports of Sudan authorities are instructing recently arrived Ethiopian/Tigrians refugees in Hamadyat camp to dismantle and go to the mainland of Sudan in fear of potential war between Ethiopia. This instruction was given to the refugees Friday.
- Satellite pictures have detected fires in Shimelba refugee camp in Tigray. The origin is unknown.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 19 December)

- Ethiopia is offering rewards of 10 million Ethiopian birr (roughly \$250,000 / 205,000 euros) for information on the exact location of members of the TPLF leadership that leads to their capture. A hotline for information has been set up
- Looting continues to be reported, including 500 dairy cows and hundreds of calves stolen by Amharic forces.
- Communication with the region remains difficult. Many people are still unable to contact family and friends. News and events remain hard to confirm.
- Mekelle University announces graduation ceremony of students, pictures online are from previous years.
- Staff at Mekelle University are reporting back to work.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 19 December)

- Oromo protests aimed to inform the international community about the negative electoral environment for the upcoming election as much of the Oromo leaders are in prison.
- There is concern about the inability to contact an Ethiopian church bishop in Adigrat. No communication has been received since 23 November when he reported shortages of food and medicine.
- Huawei is looking to move its regional headquarters, currently in DRC, to Ethiopia. It has said that it aims to take advantage of the growth of the telecommunications sector.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 31 - 20 December

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Regional dimension (as confirmed per 20 December)

- IGAD to meet Sunday 20 Dec in Addis Ababa, chaired by Sudan PM Hamdok. Today a meeting was held in Djibouti between Djibouti PM Kamil Mohamed, Somalia Pres Farmaajo and VP Mabior of South Sudan.

Military situation (as confirmed per 20 December)

- Tension between Ethiopia and Sudan is increasing. Sudan has sent more troops, including Rapid Support Forces, and equipment to the border area. Support from the Bani Amer and al-Habb tribes in the states of Kassala and Gedaref, including food supplies and finances. Talks with Ethiopia have stopped.
- A report based on testimonials of three Egyptian officials and one European diplomat indicates that the UAE used its base in Assab (Eritrea) to launch drones strikes against Tigray. The investigative platform Bellingcat confirmed the presence of Chinese-produced drones at the UAE's military base in Assab, Eritrea.
- Egyptian officials are reportedly concerned about strengthening ties between the UAE and Israel. They fear that both countries will collaborate in the construction of an alternative to the Suez canal starting from Haifa in Israel.
- Egypt is reportedly encouraging Sudan to support the TPLF in Tigray. It wants to strengthen a joint position in relation to negotiations on the GERD Dam, which impacts both countries downstream.
- Sudan has reportedly captured Eritrean soldiers dressed in Amhara militia uniforms fighting along the Sudan border alongside Amhara special forces.
- A foreign diplomat has stated that "thousands" of Eritrean soldiers are engaged in Tigray. Two diplomats stated that Eritrean troops entered Ethiopia through three northern border towns: Zalambessa, Rama and Badme.
- Killings occurred in Edaga Hamus, a small town in Tigray. Eritrean soldiers reportedly killed approximately 150 civilians, including a priest and women seeking refuge in a church, located 4 km to the west of Marieam Dengelat. The town and some rural villages (Maimegelta, Dengelat, Tsa'a and Hangoda) are under the control of Eritrean forces. The military is slaughtering the animals. People are starving to death.
- Eritrean soldiers were in Mekelle (Tigray), according to a resident and two diplomats receiving information from the ground. They state that some soldiers were wearing Eritrean uniforms, whilst others wore Ethiopian uniforms but "spoke Tigrinya with an Eritrean accent and drove trucks without license plates."
- There are multiple reports that the Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF) are looting property from the Sur Company and transporting the loot to Addis Ababa.

- A deacon and 15 civilians were killed by Eritrean and ENDF soldiers in Adigrat while trying to protect the Addis Pharmaceutical Factory from looting.

International dimension (as confirmed per 20 December)

- US Senators Booker (D-NJ) and Young (R-IN) released a joint statement on the conflict in Ethiopia: "The conflict in Ethiopia remains far from over, despite Prime Minister Abiy's claim that military operations are complete. We are deeply concerned by reports of Eritrean refugees in Tigray being killed, abducted and forcibly returned to Eritrea by Eritrean forces, as well as disturbing reports that some trying to reach safer areas are being prevented from leaving." They also noted that "the internationalisation of the conflict is a threat to US interests" and called on Ethiopia to abide by its commitments.
- Cameron Hudson, a former director for African affairs at the US National Security Council, stated that there is division in the U.S. government on speaking publicly about Eritrea's involvement in Tigray, due to strategic and tactical considerations.
- An analyst believes that Eritrean President Isaias is weak and when the TPLF is removed, Eritrean generals will remove Isaias, leading to "integration" of Eritrean and Ethiopia, giving Ethiopia access to a seaport.
- The EU has stated that Tigray is on the edge of a humanitarian catastrophe which risks destabilizing the whole neighbourhood. The EU increased humanitarian funding for the area by €23.7 million on Saturday. EU humanitarian assistance will go to organisations in Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan.
- UN deputy spokesperson for SG Antonio Guterres, has stated that many people in the region have not received any assistance, and that deliveries by some agencies have been limited. The UN continues to "call for immediate and unfettered access to all areas where people have been affected by the fighting."

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 20 December)

- Police and TPLF absence has led to lawlessness in Mekelle. Youth especially targeted by ENDF soldiers.
- Electricity and phone lines intermittently working in Mekelle, but not in most areas in Tigray. The Internet is still down.
- Civil servants were ordered back to work by the provisional government in Tigray but few report to work.
- The UN reports that many Tigray people have no access to food, water, cash, power and telecommunications.
- Catholic Bishop Tesfaselassie Medhin of Adigrat has been reported safe in his residence.
- The Apostolic Nuncio to Ethiopia, Archbishop Antoine Camilleri, expressed "solidarity with Bishop Medhin who was missing in the assembly because of the situation in his diocese where the war is hard hit."

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 20 December)

- Ethnic profiling of Tigray continues. A prominent Tigrayan activist and lawyer living in Addis Ababa, was detained on Saturday by Ethiopian police. A former TV Tigray employee and several priests of Tigrayan ethnic origins were also reportedly arrested. Another Tigrayan, an Ethiopian Airlines employee was arrested last week

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 32 - 21 December

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Regional dimension (as confirmed per 21 December)

- The 38th IGAD extraordinary summit took place on Sunday 20 December in Djibouti. It was chaired by PM Hamdok of Sudan.
- During the IGAD meeting, Ethiopian PM Ahmed met with Sudanese PM Hamdok to discuss bilateral relations. According to PM Hamdok it was agreed that Sudan and Ethiopia will hold a meeting of the High Boundary Committee on 22 December (Tuesday) to delineate their shared border.
- According to diplomats present, the tensions at the summit were running high. They also dispute that PM Hamdok had a meeting with PM Ahmed.
- President Farmaajo and President Kenyatta had a bilateral meeting during the IGAD Summit. Somalia and Kenya have agreed to hold de-escalation talks. The AU put pressure on them to resolve the row.
- In a further development, Somalia has sent hundreds of Turkish-trained Gorgor unit troops to Dolow near the border with Kenya and Ethiopia. Kenya has also deployed more forces to the area.
- Turkey has recently been sending troops and equipment to Somalia. There are reports that Turkey may deploy drones to the area in support of the Somali army. Turkey opened its biggest overseas base in Mogadishu in 2017 and sees Somalia as a major partner in the region.
- The Sudanese Tribune and DW have reported that the Sudanese military has regained control of Jabal Abu Tayyur, in the disputed land on the Ethiopian-Sudan border. According to reliable sources, the military is advancing further. Heavy fighting against Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) and Amharic militia is taking place in Metena near the Ethiopian-Sudanese border. The Sudanese military reportedly attacked an Ethiopian army base. The army Chief of Staff al-Barun personally oversaw the operation.
- The Ethiopian government and media are said not to be reporting the military clashes with Sudan.
- The first journalist visiting the Western Shire region of Tigray, VRT journalist Stijn Vercruysse, reports footage of deserted homesteads. He states that the estimation that 1 million Tigrayan people have been displaced in Tigray might be an understatement. Vercruysse confirms the presence of Eritrean soldiers and confirms the abduction of Eritrean refugees in Tigray by Eritrean forces back to Eritrea. He found the Shimelba refugee camp almost deserted.
- The Somali Foreign Minister was in Brussels today to meet EU officials. Somalia is increasing its pressure to remove Kenya from AMISOM, the AU peacekeeping mission in Somalia. It has dispatched officials to other AMISOM member countries. Under the AMISOM agreement, Somalia can not do this unilaterally.

- Footage on social media of an ENDF general who escaped to Eritrea when the conflict with Tigray started on 4 November. He states that Eritrea welcomed Ethiopian military, providing full support.

International dimension (as confirmed per 21 December)

- EU High Representative, Josep Borell, released a statement on the IGAD Summit: “The European Union joins the millions across the region affected by the current crises, in placing their faith in today’s summit. We support all efforts to encourage dialogue and to silence guns. As IGAD’s most significant international partner, we also hope that the outcome of today’s meeting will bring the region a step closer to finding a sustainable solution to the ongoing crises, in line with respect for international commitments and, in particular, international humanitarian law.”

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 21 December)

- BBC published testimonies of witnesses from Mekelle reporting that artillery shelling took place before November 28th. The shelling destroyed houses in residential areas and killed civilians. In one case a whole family was killed, leaving only a little boy alive. A doctor says that he personally saw 22 bodies. It was hard to take proper care of those wounded by the artillery due to a critical shortage of medical supplies.
- Flights from Addis Ababa to Mekelle were cancelled on Sunday.
- There are reports of looting of ritual books and other artifacts from remote monasteries in Tigray. These are being transported to Eritrea.
- According to an analyst, the entire leadership of the TPLF is intact. Over 70 of them have retreated to the mountains. Only two have been arrested.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 21 December)

- Three people were killed by an explosion in Addis Ababa, caused according to the Addis Abeba policy by an abandoned bomb. It took place near the city center and three people were killed. There have been several explosions in the capital since the offensive in Tigray started. Police have blamed the TPLF for some of these explosions, although evidence has not been presented. The TPLF has not claimed responsibility for any of these.
- Social media reports that children of current and former TPLF leaders are detained in Mekelle. The daughter of former Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, Semehal Meles, and the youngest son of former Major General Hayelom, Berhanemeskel Hayelom, are mentioned to be among them.
- Ten Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) leaders, cadre and journalists have been arrested. These are: Mohamed Ragasa, OLF Central Committee Member and Spokesperson of the OLF; Murataa Sabaa, OLF Central Committee Member; Ayyaantuu Bulchaa, Journalist (SBO); Ibsaa Gaaddisaa, Journalist (SBO); Dr Gadaa Oljirraa - Office Administrator of OLF Chairman; Yeroosan Hayyuu Organisational Affairs- Finfinnee area); Tumsaa (Asaffaa Fikadu) - Member of Organisational Affairs; Gurmuu Ayyanaa - OLF cadre; Geessisaa Kuusaa - Organisational Affairs- Mandii area; and Lidia Ali Miseensa - Women Association member. It is not known where they are being detained.
- Fighting between Amhara and Afar militias is taking place in Wollo Province.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 33 - 22 December

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Regional situation (as confirmed per 22 December)

- Mahad Salad, a Somali opposition lawmaker, is asking whether the Somali govt forces that were deployed yesterday in Dolow district at the Somalia-Kenya border, are Somali or Eritrean troops. It was reported that the arriving troops include troops trained by Eritrea months ago, sent from Asmara.
- An *unconfirmed* twitter post claimed that the Somali military fired rockets with the assumed aim to prevent a Kenyan military aircraft from carrying out an air strike.
- A delegation from South Africa, led by the National Organizer of the South Africa Communist Party-SACP Mhelekwa Nxumalo, organised in the Somaliland Action Group in Johannesburg, visited Somaliland. They were received by President Bihi. The group advocates for recognition of Somaliland.
- A strict lockdown is in place in Eritrea from 22-12. The use of private cars is not allowed but trucks are exempted. People are banned from moving between villages. No end date for the measures has been provided.
- A witness told the Guardian that "Eritreans were really leading the Ethiopian forces in the area". They played a major role in the ENDF 'law and order' operation in Tigray.
- Eritrean soldiers armed Eritrean refugees in Tigrayan camps, "before looting property, slaughtering livestock and burning crops" of local populations living near the camps.
- The Ethiopian PM, Abiy Ahmed, has said that the recent skirmishes along the border with Sudan will not break the historic ties that exist between both countries.

International dimension (as confirmed per 22 December)

- Moussa Faki Mahamat, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission commented on the tough challenges in Ethiopia: "It cannot be denied (..) that the crisis in Tigray regional state has provoked large-scale displacement" The AU encourages IGAD: "to support Ethiopia in addressing the humanitarian dimensions." Faki called for attention to refugees and displaced people.
- AU Commission Chair Faki emphasized that it "is necessary to recall the important role that Ethiopia plays in peacekeeping operations in the region, and I hope that these efforts will continue."
- On Saturday 19 Dec, Ethiopians and Germans demonstrated in Frankfurt for peace in Ethiopia without hatred and ethnic differences. Development aid from Germany to Ethiopia was, in 2019, €352.5m.
- The Ethiopian Federal Police Commission stated that it would work in partnership with Interpol to apprehend accomplices of the TPLF "for whom warrants were issued and reside abroad."

- Federal Police Crime Prevention Sector Head, Deputy Commissioner General Melaku Fanta has told the media in Mekelle that arrest warrants have been issued against anyone that is collaborating with the TPLF.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 22 December)

- William Carter (Norwegian Refugee Council) tweeted him singing a Christmas song from one of the new refugee camps in Sudan. He dedicated it to all the separated families.
https://twitter.com/WillCarter_NRC/status/1340973538770100225

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 22 December)

- According to a witness on the ground ENDF soldiers killed 'many' in Hagere Selam in Tigray. They are thought to have come to the town to take revenge after they lost a battle against Tigrayan forces.
- In subsequent days the town Hagere Selam was 'entirely' looted by Eritrean soldiers fighting on the side of the ENDF. They were going door to door, forcing their way in and taking what they could, especially electronics, TVs, audio installations and mobile phones.
- In Hagere Selam there is no water and no electricity. Little food is available and the hospital is in a dire situation as medical supplies are running critically low. It cannot refer patients to the main Ayder referral hospital in Mekelle.
- Witnesses from the ground state that the Ethiopian and Eritrean armies moved along the roads, from town to town. This is where the people are at a direct risk of being killed or looted. Witnesses from Tigray report that Eritrean soldiers are now in Abiy Addi and in Mekelle.
- According to an analyst the harvest in Tigray is worst hit (1) in South Tigray because of heavy damage by locusts; (2) in Western Tigray where Amhara and Eritrean soldiers are all over the place, and people fear harvesting crops; (3) in places along the roads.
- Suspended activities of humanitarian organisations in Tigray include sixteen humanitarian INGOs with 596 staff (international and national) and other national non-governmental organisations.
- Pictures on social media show 21 destroyed tanks, armoured cars, and BM-21 rocket launchers taken on the road from Maykeyih to Hewanii. According to the source, these vehicles were destroyed by the Tigray Defence Forces. The drivers reportedly returned from Mekoni to Mekelle due to fears of continuing fighting on the Southern front.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 22 December)

- The International Rescue Committee is warning that the war in Tigray is making the fight against the locust invasion more difficult and that millions of Ethiopians are in need of food assistance.
- The Oromo Liberation Front is urging the international community to ensure that the Ethiopian government releases political prisoners ahead of the elections planned in 2021.
- The Ethiopia Development Partners Group (DPG) Executive Committee members received a brief by the Minister of Finance, Ahmed Shide, and Minister of Peace, Muferiat Kamil, on the measures to ensure "peace and the return to normalcy after the end of the law enforcement operation in Tigray".

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 34 - 23 December

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Military situation (as confirmed per 23 December)

- Social media sources indicate heavy fighting on three fronts on Tuesday. Tigray sources report an ENDF brigade was destroyed in Hugumburda on the way to Mayichaw town, a division destroyed in BietMara, Alaje, one battalion destroyed in Maykintal (Central front), and two brigades on Zana, Shire fronts.
- Further Tigray reports indicate an Ethiopian fighter jet was downed at Abiy Addi.
- Advisor to the elected government of Tigray, Getachew Reda, states that fighting continues on many fronts: "enemy forces are being routed in Zana, had already lost hundreds of soldiers in Adet and Tsimbla." He claims that Eritrean and Ethiopian forces have lost an air force gunship in BietMara.
- Getachew Reda accuses the Ethiopian Government of carrying out a "genocidal campaign" in Tigray.

Regional situation (as confirmed per 23 December)

- The United States Africa Command reports that the USS Makin Island ship has arrived in Somalia to relocate US "forces in Somalia to other East Africa operating locations while maintaining pressure on violent extremists and supporting partner forces".
- Refugees International reports that Eritrean refugees are being rounded up in Addis Ababa and returned to Tigray after having fled from Tigray, and are also being deported back from Tigray to Eritrea, from where they originally fled. This confirms reports by journalist Stijn Vercruysse (VRT) who interviewed Eritrean refugees in the refugee camps in Shire reporting forced deportations.
- VRT journalist shows images of Eritrean soldiers in Tigray. It would appear from the now available evidence that Eritrean soldiers crossed the border in Ethiopian uniforms, and participated in fighting, and are looting in Tigray.

International dimension (as confirmed per 23 December)

- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Commissioner Bachelet urges independent investigation of human rights abuses, stating "the need for independent human rights monitors to be given access to Tigray to adequately assess the human suffering resulting from the conflict, verify allegations and to help ensure accountability for violations".
- OHCHR Bachelet urges Ethiopian authorities to provide unhindered access to the Tigray region. Two humanitarian assessment missions have entered Tigray on Monday (21 Dec.)
- OHCHR spokesperson Liz Throssell office states that OHCHR has held talks with the Ethiopian government and plans to prepare a team to verify reported rights abuses as soon as possible.

- UK House of Lords member David Alton sends a report to UK Government Ministers which warns of serious human rights violations in the conflict in Tigray and increasing internationalisation of the conflict.
- Social media messages state that Eritrea would have ordered Egyptian ambassador to leave Asmara.
- Norwegian Professor Kjetil Tronvoll states in an open letter to Ethiopian authorities that he has experienced “repeated and grievous ad hominem attacks from an Ethiopian government spokesperson and internet trolls associated with the regime”.
- Norwegian Refugee Council appeals again for unhindered access to Tigray for their aid workers and relief trucks, which are on standby.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 23 December)

- Journalist Stijn Vercruysse, VRT reporter currently in Tigray, reports serious injuries caused by bombs; stating that there is an acute lack of assistance, doctors and medical supplies in Shire, Tigray. According to the VRT, the situation is a humanitarian disaster in the making.
- The VRT has also seen evidence of tanks filled with loot in Shire.
- VRT further shows footage of many deserted ghost towns in the Shire area.
- Accounts on social media allege heavy damage and looting in Adigrat, Tigray, including factories; source reports the university campuses were occupied by Eritrean soldiers and everything has been taken.
- A new provisional administrative department “Setit Humera zone” has been created and will include all the areas west of the Tekeze river in Tigray. This includes almost all the lowlands where many Tigrayans live. This new administrative department will be administered as part of the Amhara region.
- Many villages in the Western Tigray region are completely deserted. The majority of the houses have been looted. The inhabitants have fled the area. A witness reports that security administrators in the region are encouraging Amhara to settle in the empty houses and bring their families.
- Amhara militiamen are reportedly recruiting 20,000 more men. They want to use this manpower to face Sudan and police the new administrative area, the “Setit Humera zone”. The Amhara special forces are currently fighting the Sudanese army at the border over control over fertile land.
- People continue to be killed in the streets by militiamen and soldiers. A video of an unknown date shows panicked people on the streets of Mekelle running from gunshots.
- In Humera, a large number of residents have fled and signs in Tigrinya have been covered. Shops and houses are closed. In Dansha, bars and hotels were renamed and reopened after their owners fled.
- Shops in Mekelle remain closed.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 23 December)

- Journalist Stijn Vercruysse (VRT) warns of a lack of food, water, and medicines for the Eritrean refugees and other displaced people.
- Refugees in Adi Harush refugee camp state that attackers came to confiscate around 180 cellphones. The refugees feel unsafe, continue to hear heavy weaponry, and are not allowed to leave the camp.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 35 - 24 December

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International dimension (as confirmed per 24 December)

- Alex de Waal, Executive Director of the World Peace Foundation at The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, asks who will call out Eritrea's role in the Tigray conflict, amid "mounting evidence that activities of Eritrean troops include perpetrating war crimes on a vast scale."
- Ethiopian government has not been able to clarify to Egypt when workers will return to work in factories in Tigray, which were closed four months ago. Factories in Tigray have been heavily looted.
- Egypt plans to file an international lawsuit to protect Egyptian investments in Ethiopia, stating \$10 million has been lost by Egyptian investors so far in Ethiopia due to the unrest in the Tigray region.
- US troops being pulled out of Somalia and redeployed in Kenya and Djibouti, from where US troops would continue to surveil the Al Qaeda affiliated terrorist organisation Al Shabab.
- The redeployment of US troops to Kenya comes at a time that Kenya is under pressure of debt repayments to China, related to the Belt and Road Initiative. Kenya faces a risk to lose ownership of Mombasa port which serves as a collateral for the debts to China in 'debt-for-equity swaps'.
- US Secretary of State, Pompeo, announces 18 million USD for refugees affected by the Tigray conflict.

Regional situation (as confirmed per 24 December)

- President of Somaliland, Bihi, meets President of Djibouti, Guelleh, to discuss peace and stability.
- Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Ambassador Dina Mufti states Ethiopia and Sudan have agreed to resolve the border issue, blaming 'enemies of Ethiopia' for the escalation. In other reports Sudan was accused of an unfruitful discussion with the Ethiopian delegation yesterday.
- Reported that the Sudanese armed forces state they recaptured areas and camps in eastern Sudan.
- The Committee of the affected lands of Al Fashqa in Gedaref state states that it will reject any negotiation of the Sudanese Government with the Ethiopian delegation to discuss the border until the Sudanese army is in control of all known international border points between the two countries.
- Der Spiegel spoke to a witness who stated Eritrean troops killed 81 civilians held up in the Al-Nejashi mosque; another witness reports shelling and looting by Eritrean troops.

Military situation (as confirmed per 24 December)

- Report of targeted attack on civilians in Benishangul Gumuz regional state. An eyewitness stated there were up to 500 gunmen. Over 90 deaths, burning of houses and displacement were reported. Local medics reported treating victims with gunshot wounds.

- Report that Sudan has arrested an Ethiopian captain and four soldiers accused of planning assassinations on Ethiopian refugees of Tigray nationality in Sudan.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 24 December)

- Regional government of Benishangul Gumuz in Ethiopia said that five officials accused of orchestrating the killings were arrested. The list of arrests reportedly includes a former social affairs deputy at the Federal ministry of labour and social affairs, the former vice president of Benishangul Gumuz region and the Metekel Zone Prosperity Party office head.
- Benishangul-Gumuz, a region in Ethiopia, is populated by Humuz and other ethnic groups, but according to reports, recently farmers and business people from the Amharic region entered into the area, claiming fertile land, according to reports.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 24 December)

- Human Rights Watch (HRW) Laetitia Bader reports findings of interviews with refugees from the Tigray conflict. Residents of towns in western Tigray report initial heavy shelling, followed by the entering of Ethiopian federal forces and Amhara police forces known as "Liyu Hail" and Amhara youth militia groups known as "Fano." HRW reports looting by both Amhara forces, as well as 'unidentified gunmen'.
- Refugees told HRW they witnessed extrajudicial executions by federal forces and their allies. Victims were suspected TPLF members, fighters, retired soldiers, but also business people and farmers.
- Refugees from Mai Kadra see hundreds of bodies, both ethnic Amharas and Tigrayans, says HRW.
- Medical professionals, notably in Humera, were overwhelmed "by the influx of injured civilians and bodies of those who had been killed in the heavy shelling," during military action in Tigray says HRW.
- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reports that the two humanitarian assessment teams that entered Tigray on Monday are headed to Shire and Mekelle. The assessment is estimated to be completed in a week.
- The Amhara groups who now administer the region that was Western Tigray, now the provisional "Setit Humera zone" are reportedly politically divided.
- New reports of massacres and executions in Adigrat, Tigray. Calls for investigation of what transpired.

Situation refugees (as confirmed per 24 December)

- MSF acting emergency coordinator in Gedaref, Sudan, warns that the number of people relocated from Hamdayet to Um Raquba camp is going to accelerate as "the scale of needs is alarming."
- UNHCR and partners urgently seek US\$156 million to support refugees fleeing Ethiopia's Tigray crisis.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 36 - 25 December

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Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 25 December)

- Colonel Ayalew Beyene, chief of the Metekel Zone federal army Command Post, says 100 civilians were killed in the attacks in Benishangul-Gumuz. Colonel Ayalew further states the perpetrators were “bandits” from the Gumuz community who do not represent the whole community.
- Witnesses speak of attacks on civilians in Benishangul-Gumuz: Belay Wajera, a farmer in the western town of Bulen, counted 82 dead bodies in a field near his home after the raid at dawn on 23 Dec. Reuters reports he and his family awoke to the sound of gunshots and ran out of their home as men shouted “catch them”, he said. His wife and five of his children were shot dead, he was shot in the buttocks while four other children escaped and are now missing.”
- 7 officials have currently been detained for playing an alleged role in planning the attacks.
- Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed announces the launch of a government military task force in Benishangul-Gumuz. The Benishangul-Gumuz communication bureau announced the army has so far killed 42 members of the armed group and reports capturing weapons.
- Analysts warn the situation could escalate to an open conflict between the Benishangul-Gumuz and Amhara regional states.
- National Electoral Board of Ethiopia has announced its plan to conduct the postponed national election in late May or early June next year.
- Report that around 280 Priests of Tigray origin have been imprisoned in Addis Ababa.
- Deputy Head of Intergovernmental Bureau, Former Head of Government Communications Affairs Office, Amhara National Regional State, Ethiopia, sends the following personal tweet: “We have to defend ourselves. They don’t let us live. Let us not allow them to live. We are confronted with existential threat. As the former president said, the question is; shall we be vanished or shall they. The choice is clear. They have to vanish!”
- #StopWarOnTigre calls for suspension of the handle @AsemahagnAseres which is calling for genocide.
- Member of Horn of Africa Editorial Board, Faisal Roble, states “Ethiopia is no longer a federal state. PM Abiy violently & methodically removed the leaders of Somali, Oromo, Afar, Amhara, Benshangul-Gumuz, and Tigray. Next step is a constitutional amendment to restore a unitary system. What follows next - peace or war - is anyone's guess.”
- PM Abiy publishes article on the ‘law and order operations’ in Tigray, stating he is “determined to ensure our next elections, scheduled to take place in mid-2021, are fair, free, and inclusive, and that the people of Tigray, like all other Ethiopians, shall soon be led by a regional government of their free own choice.”

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 25 December)

- Asimba Democratic Party (ADP) in the Tigray region, releases press release urging for 1. the immediate end of the ongoing war in Tigray state and to start the banking, medical, telephone, transport, electricity and water services in Tigray state immediately; 2. immediate humanitarian assistance; 3. the Eritrean army, which has been wreaking havoc in Tigray, to leave Tigray territory immediately; 4. the stop to massacring of civilians in the Tigray region and to investigate the ongoing human rights violations by an independent body; 5. to immediately end the ongoing human rights abuses against civilians, including those imprisoned simply for being Tigrinyan; 6. for the federal government to fulfil its responsibility to end the ongoing ethnic cleansing of the Amhara people in Benishangul Gumuz.
- World Food Programme delivered food for 35,000 refugees in Adi Harush and Mai Ayni refugee camps, but the convoy to Hitsats and Shimelba camps was unable to deliver aid due to insecurity in the area.
- ACT Alliance launches an appeal for funds so that its members in Ethiopia, Ethiopia Orthodox Church Development Inter-Church Aid Commission (EOC-DICAC), Ethiopia Evangelical Mekane Yesus Church (EECMY-DASSC) and Lutheran World Federation (LWF), can respond to the crisis in Tigray.
- Facebook post of a situation with shooting and panic in Mekelle, probably from several weeks ago: <https://www.facebook.com/100034212801153/videos/pcb.408541016962988/408539763629780/>

Military situation (as confirmed per 25 December)

- Ethiopia PM Abiy Ahmed announced that forces will be deployed in Metekel zone, Benishangul Gumuz regional state after the massacre of yesterday in which more than hundred people were killed the day after the PM visited the same area.

International dimension (as confirmed per 25 December)

- Somaliland President Bihi receives a red carpet welcome during a visit to Djibouti on 23 Dec. Somaliland is seeking international recognition. It runs its own military, currency and central bank.
- There is no response at this moment from Somalia to the visit of Bihi to Djibouti. Previously Mogadishu cut diplomatic ties with Kenya and Guinea after they pulled out the red-carpet for President Bihi.
- The United States expresses deep concern “for the safety and security of Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia”.
- The United States calls on “the Ethiopian government to uphold its obligations under international law and to take appropriate measures to ensure the protection and safety of all refugees in Ethiopia. Those responsible for egregious abuses or violations against civilians must be held accountable.”

Regional situation (as confirmed per 25 December)

- Opposition candidates in Somalia reject the election schedule set out by the Federal Electoral Implementation Team.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 37 - 26 December

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Military situation (as confirmed per 26 December)

- Reported that US Africom has begun an operation called Operation Octave Quartz (OOQ), with a mission to relocate U.S. forces in Somalia to other East Africa operating locations “while maintaining pressure on violent extremists and supporting partner forces”. US Africom is the military command for US operations in African. OOQ started after the Trump administration announced the reduction in the number of US military deployed in Somali territory.
- The US operation Octave Quarts consists of the Makin Island Amphibious Ready Group. This is an amphibious emergency response group led by the USS Makin Island assault ship (28,000 tons and a length of 258 meters and a bridge for the flight operations of the F-35B Lightning fighter-bombers II and AV-8B Harrier and the tiltrotor MC-22B Osprey).
- The Government of Sudan announces the completion of the restoration of its border lands with Ethiopia where the army of Sudan has taken over control.
- Military exercises and drills by the Egyptian army are intensified given heightened tension in the region, including joint exercises with Sudan.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 26 December)

- Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for Secretary-General Antonio Guterres states that the UN has sent two teams to assess the humanitarian needs in Ethiopia’s conflict-ridden Tigray state. One team is currently stranded in Addis Abeba requiring additional permits.
- Second UN team to assess humanitarian needs has arrived in Mekelle, is planning to go to Adigrat.
- Reported that the Ethiopia federal military killed 42 armed men who “took part in a massacre in western Benishangul-Gumuz region.”
- Ethiopia Human Rights Commission releases monitoring report on Konso Zone in SNNPR (South Ethiopia), reporting “gruesome killings, injuries, displacement and property destruction” leading to the conclusion that a “sustainable solution” is needed.
- The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) announced that the registration of 26 political parties is cancelled.
- The Ethiopian Democratic Party (EDP) has been cancelled from registration for the elections. The EDP was founded by the Lidetu Ayalew, who was in police detention for several months and was released last week.
- NEBE is consulting today with political parties to decide a draft election timetable for Ethiopia’s general elections expected to take place in the first half of 2021.

Europe External Programme with Africa ivzw

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Regional situation (as confirmed per 26 December)

- Reports that Eritrea is withdrawing its troops from Tigray.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 26 December)

- New cabinet members appointed in the provisional interim regional administration in Tigray appointed are named as: Dr. Kahisay Birhanu, Finance Bureau Head; Engineer Alula Habteab, Construction, Road and Transport Bureau Head; Dr. Fasika Amdeselassie, Health Bureau Head; Mr. Abera Nigussie, Justice Bureau Head; Mrs. Etenesh Nigussie, Communications Affairs Bureau Head; Mr. Yosef Tesfay, Trade, Industry, Urban Development Bureau Head; Dr. Tesfay Solomon, Education Bureau Head; Dr. Gebrehiwot Legesse, Water Research and Design Bureau Head; Mr. Solomon Abera, Water Resources Bureau Head; Mr. Abrha Desta, Social Affairs Bureau Head; Mr. Gebremeskel Kassa, Tigray Interim Administration Office Head.
- The new head of the Bureau of Health in Tigray, Dr. Fasika Amdesellaise, spoke in an interview of the death of civilians in Mekelle. He served as a surgeon at Ayder Referral Hospital in Mekelle where he worked during the military operations in November.
- New head of Bureau of Health, Dr. Fasika Amdesellaise, confirmed that Wukro and Adigrat hospitals were “completely looted and empty”.

International dimension (as confirmed per 26 December)

- Egypt backs Sudan in the clashes at the border with Ethiopia.
- EU expresses concern of “grave violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law”.
- EU states that it is “of paramount importance that hostilities cease completely, that civilians are protected and that all parties to the conflict uphold international humanitarian law, including ensuring the safety of aid workers. Unimpeded humanitarian access to all people in need in all affected areas of the country must be guaranteed, to carry out needs assessments, deliver response and monitor aid in line with the humanitarian principles of impartiality, neutrality, and independence. (..) All refugees and displaced people within Tigray and beyond must be effectively protected, including preventing any act of forced and premature relocation or return.”
- EU further expresses concern with the situation of “ethnically targeted violence in Benishangul-Gumuz as well as all other allegations of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law need to be impartially investigated and accountability ensured.”

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 38 - 27 December 2020

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Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 27 December)

- The national election in Ethiopia will take place nationwide on the 5th of June 2021, as decided and announced by the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE).
- The Tigray Regional State is not included in the timetable. The election board announced that a date for elections in Tigray will be announced once the state of emergency in Tigray state is lifted.

Military and regional situation (as confirmed per 27 December)

- Sudan Minister of Information, Faisal Mohamed Saleh, stated that intelligence reports “indicate that the weapons used in the attacks” targeting territory in Sudan, belonged to the army.
- Sudan has reclaimed land that was occupied by Ethiopian farmers in the last 25 years, this land has now been brought under control of the Sudanese army.
- The Sudan army is mobilising defense capacity both at the Eritrean and Ethiopian border, with increasing fears of further clashes in the border areas.
- PM Abiy has denied any involvement of Addis Abeba in the border conflict with Sudan, emphasising the friendly relations between Sudan and Ethiopia. PM Abiy previously negotiated between different parties in Sudan resulting in the current government.
- The Ethiopian military is perceived to have a major say in the negotiation taking place regarding the Benishangul Gumuz Region, according to ALAIN Amharic news which reports that senior military officials have been in closed meetings with the senior officials in the zone.
- Some officials in the Benishangul Gumuz Region have been arrested (not reported by whom).
- Unconfirmed report on social media that a Major General, Commander of ENDF Eastern Division, has been killed in battle with Tigray Defense Forces in Tigray.
- Continued fighting and looting reported in social media. An elder of Adigrat Town, named Ato Debasom Abraha was reportedly killed today while defending his property from looting by Eritrean soldiers. He reportedly killed 14 Eritrean troops before he was shot.
- Reported that several civilians by Eritrean soldiers were “executed” in Adi Da’zero town, a town between Shire and Sheraro, near the Eritrean border. According to a second report, invading Eritrean forces executed a “total of 58 civilians in Adwa (31) and Adi Da’ero, (27)”. Calls for full access by the UN to investigate these killings.
- Unconfirmed report of increasing tension on the Kenya - Somalia border between Mandera and Bula Hawo as Somali troops and Kenyan backed Janan fighters are increasing the number of fighters at the border.

Regional situation (as confirmed per 27 December)

- Report of VICE suggests Amhara youth militia Fano was involved in the massacre in Mai Kadra, as Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) looked on as the massacre went on and ethnic profiling was carried out preventing civilians from fleeing.
- New witness report on the Mai Kadra massacre published by VICE, interviewing refugees who had reached Al Qadarif, Sudan: "He was working as a day labourer on a farm near the city of Mai Kadra when Ethiopian government-aligned ethnic militias known as Fano, from the neighbouring region of Amhara, descended. "Fano from the Amhara region came, then took us all out from our homes. We saw our neighbours killed and slaughtered, in the same way as you cut wood, with an axe and knife." Fano is a youth militia from Amharic region in Ethiopia, neighbouring Tigray.
- According to the report of VICE: "youths were sent to kill us. [A group of] more than 70 were trying to kill us. We hid ourselves in the fields. They hunted us. On the way many were killed. We passed many dead bodies." The witness states that only six made it to the border out of a group of eight: "They checked the IDs of people...if they find someone with Tigrayan origin...[they] slaughter with a knife."
- The report of Vice alleges that: "As chaos tore through the city, (..) Ethiopian federal forces stood by as Fano fighters went door to door, demanding to see IDs in order to identify ethnic Tigrayans."
- According to the report of Vice "Fano militants continued to terrorise civilians attempting to flee to Sudan." In earlier reports it was observed that ENDF troops blocked refugees from passing to Sudan.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 27 December)

- Reported from Mekelle, the capital of Tigray, that civil servants and university employees are not yet back in office and that they are in a state of uncertainty on their situation. Besides, government employees and civil servants have not received salaries since October.
- Banks in Mekelle are still closed.
- Dimsti Woyane (DW) Television from the TPLF-led administration in Tigray is back on air after having been taken off the air, when PFDJ lost control of Mekelle. It is not known where the TV channel is broadcasted from.
- The Alameda Textile Factory and other factories are reported to have been completely destroyed and looted by Eritrean troops.

International dimension (as confirmed per 27 December)

- The official account of the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) #UNGeneva states that "if civilians were deliberately killed by a party or parties to the conflict, these killings would amount to war crimes." The office points out that independent investigation is needed that is impartial, thorough, transparent.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 39 - 28 December 2020

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Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 28 December)

- Fears that the security operation by the Ethiopian National Defence Forces in the Metekel Zone of Benishangul Gumuz region will especially target ethnic Gumuz.
- The fears of an ethnic profiling in Gumuz was further aroused by a hate-speech tweet of an official of the Amhara Regional state, Asemahegn Aseres: "We have to defend ourselves. They don't let us live. Let us not allow them to live. We are confronted with existential threat. As the former president said, the question is; shall we be vanished or shall they. The choice is clear. They have to vanish!", where "the former president" refers to Mengistu Hailemariam; and "they have to vanish" to the Gumuz people.

Regional situation (as confirmed per 28 December)

- Three people have been injured by Somali and AMISOM forces in a peaceful protest calling for the release of 50 people arrested during security operations. Soldiers shot into the crowd.
- Special Kenya Defense Forces carry out an operation to storm an Al Shabaab military camp in Boni Forest. Several Al Shabaab militants were killed and the camp was destroyed.
- The Sudanese governor of Blue Nile died in a car crash on his way to Khartoum.
- Negotiations on the border demarcation between Sudan and Ethiopia failed. The negotiators decided to hand the file to the political leadership of the two countries.
- The Sudanese minister of information has said that the Sudanese army has taken control of most of the land it says Ethiopia was encroaching on. It has taken control of 11 settlements that Ethiopian militias were controlling. Among the recaptured settlements are: Asmaro, Lebbaki, Pasha, Lamlam, Melkamo, Males, Ashkar, Arqa, Umm Pasha Teddy.
- According to the report in the Sudan Tribune, the Sudanese army expelled the Amhara forces and militias from the settlement of "Lilli" where army commanders, major traders and farmers of the Amhara ethnic group were based. Over a thousand Ethiopian farmers are living in these areas.
- Military sources review to the Sudan tribune newspaper that Eritrean army forces moved from the city of Umm Hajar, located on the border between Sudan and Eritrea, to Abd al Rafi area on the border between Sudan and Ethiopia. They were carrying heavy weaponry, according to the report.
- *Unconfirmed* reports that Sudan will receive extensive financial support from the Middle East.

Situation in Tigray

- Reported that Ethiopian troops in Mekelle city, Tigray, are checking mobile phones of citizens with a view to delete the videos and photos related to the military operations, in an apparent attempt to delete evidence of any potential wrongdoing.
- Reported in social media that more than seven Amhara special forces have raided Eritrean refugee camps in Tigray (no specific report on name of the camp) and confiscated more than 100 mobile smartphones.
- The Tigray interim provisional government makes a statement that it will work with the youth.
- A leader of TPLF, who is the former deputy mayor of Addis Ababa, addressed youth in Tigray on facebook: "In our current struggle for self-determination, the role of the youth is very important. So, any youth who can and wants to join the struggle, shall join Tigray defence forces directly or shall go to members of the Tigray regional government leadership and fight in an organized manner to free Tigray.
- Report that 60 civilians were killed by Ethiopian National Defense Forces and Eritrean forces while hiding in a church in a small village called Tashi (ጥሽ), which is approximately 60 km from Mekelle.
- It is reported that five members of one family were killed by Eritrean forces at Dengelat St Mary church, Edagahamus Tigray. List of the members killed: Kahsay Gebremeskel; Solomon Kahsay Gebremeskel; Haftom Kahsay Gebremeskel; Semere Rezene / grandson of Birhan Gebremeskel; Dawit Mulu Tsegay/ grandson of Amit Gebremeskel.
- Confirmation of yesterday's report that Debesom Abraha, a well known Tigrayan businessman, was killed in his house in Adigrat, Tigray, by Eritrean troops.

Reported International dimension (as confirmed per 27 December)

- Egypt and Sudan have come to an agreement regarding Sudanese use of Egyptian ports. Major works are taking place in Port Sudan. Consequently Egypt is allowing Sudanese use of its ports for import and export purposes. Tariffs and customs will not apply if the goods are going directly to Sudan.
- Confirmation of yesterday's report. Dimsti Woyane (DW) Television started to operate from the USA with a first broadcast on facebook:
https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=3961325073888162&id=100000321261058&sfnsn=mo The programme was presented by Liliti Gebru Hagos, a former journalist of ETV Tigrigna program.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 40 - 29 December 2020

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Regional situation (as confirmed per 29 December)

- According to the New York Times (NYT), Eritrea “joined the war in northern Ethiopia” in November and its forces “rampaged through refugee camps” where Eritrean refugees were hosted under international protection. The soldiers committed “human rights violations”.
- PM of Ethiopia Abiy, and Pres Isayas, Eritrea, deny the presence of Eritrean troops. On 30 Nov. Ahmed told the Ethiopian parliament that Eritrea “had fed, clothed and armed retreating Ethiopian soldiers.”
- NYT conducted interviews with “two dozen aid workers, refugees, United Nations officials and diplomats, including a senior American official”. Satellite images, analyzed by the NYT, have corroborated the findings from the interviews.
- NYT reported that clashes took place in refugee camps for Eritreans in Tigray between Eritrean soldiers and TPLF aligned forces. The camp's main water tank was “riddled with gunfire”.
- According to the NYT: “Eritrean soldiers looted aid supplies, stole vehicles and set fire to fields filled with crops and a nearby forested area used by refugees to collect wood.”
- Following the fight, Eritrean soldiers singled out dozens of refugees and “forced (them) back across the border into Eritrea.” Refoulement (forced return) is prohibited under international law as a fundamental principle. The refugees had fled Eritrea, an autocratic and harsh regime.
- A hundred thousand Eritrean refugees were hosted prior to the start of the military operations in camps in Tigray, Ethiopia. The New York Times quotes witnesses stating that the soldiers “burst into the camp” on November 19, and that these were Eritrean. This resulted in “mayhem”, described as “days of plunder, punishment and bloodshed.”
- A highly credible source from Eritrea informed the Situation Report that an estimated 7.000 Eritrean refugees have been forcefully returned to Eritrea and are held in “a special camp” in Eritrea. The report comes from a reliable source from the ground in Asmara (Eritrea).
- A Report that an EU official stated that looted goods were “openly sold in the Eritrean capital, Asmara.”
- Reports obtained from Asmara confirm the arrival of looted goods, including from factories and industries, held in Ashogolgol (Asmara). Catholic church leaders and elders in Eritrea continue to guide Eritreans not to buy these goods, even if cheap. Many citizens are, reportedly, following this guidance.
- More reports are coming in of Eritrean soldiers looting. The BBC has interviewed an analyst who says that sources inside Tigray are detailing that Eritrean soldiers are involved in heavy looting.
- The New York Times has also reported that witnesses say that Eritrean soldiers were wearing ENDF uniforms. This is not the first time this has been reported.

- NYT reports of an “Eritrean attack on a church in Dinglet, in eastern Tigray, on Nov. 30. By one account, 35 people whose names were provided were killed.”
- *Unconfirmed* reports that senior Eritrean military officers, L. Colonel Fisahaye Gebreab and Birhane Haile (Head of radio communication) are killed in a fight with Tigrayan forces in Tigray.
- *Unconfirmed* reports that in Nebelet, a town near Adwa, Tigray, Eritrean troops killed 54 civilians.
- *Unconfirmed* report on social media that some Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF) in Mekelle are disguised in Tigray TPLF military uniforms and that they are harassing residents.
- *Unconfirmed* report that on the border to Sudan, Eritrean forces and Ethiopian Amhara soldiers are wearing TPLF uniforms in order to mislead the warring parties.
- Refugees from Tigray in Sudan say they will not return to Ethiopia or Tigray - even if they are told to come back, because they do not feel safe.
- Fighting between Sudan and Ethiopia aligned forces continues. The West Gondar region of Ethiopia has accused Sudan of stealing and destroying property worth 1 billion Birr (25 million euro) to the area. More Ethiopian, Eritrean, and Sudanese troops are moving into the area.
- A written declaration by the Commissioner of Refugees in Sudan, dated 23 Dec 2020, of a ‘prima facie’ approach to the recognition of refugees arriving from Ethiopia after 5 Nov.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 29 December)

- A Reuters cameraman was arrested in Addis Ababa - in the presence of his wife and 3 children, and will be held for a minimum of two weeks. No charges have been filed. Reuters has strongly condemned the arrest. The arrest follows the beating on 16th December of Reuters photographer Tiksa Negeri by two police officers.
- The Addis Standard reports renewed violence in the regions of Afar and Ethiopian Somaliland. Militias of both regions have carried out attacks in the other region. Several civilians have been killed.
- *Unconfirmed* report that 29 Ethiopian police officers were killed by the Oromia Liberation Front (OLF).

Situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 29 December)

- The mental toll on workers and other helpers is increasing, MSF said. It is taking steps to address it. Triage, and nursing wounded soldiers has especially caused traumatic stress.
- Banks have reopened in Mekelle. They were closed for over a month, stopping people from accessing money needed to buy the little food available. Customers were told today only to deposit and not to withdraw money. There were large queues today of people hoping to withdraw money.
- The ADP, a local Tigrayan party, has rejected a Federal offer to join the interim provisional government of Tigra. They cite the presence of Eritrean soldiers in Tigray, killings and other human rights violations, and the destruction of public and private infrastructure as reasons not to join.

Reported International dimension (as confirmed per 29 December)

- The EU calls for an investigation into the killing of a 100 people in Benishangul-Gumuz last week.
- The Minister of water in Egypt states that Egypt will prioritise cooperation with Nile Basin countries.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 41 - 30 December 2020

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Military situation (as confirmed per 30 December)

- Fighting between ground troops of the Ethiopian aligned forces (ENDF) and Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) since early morning today (29/12) on the road from Wukro to Mekelle, including Agula, Mai Mekden, and East of Wikro in Atsbi, as well as in the outskirts of Mekelle, in Messebo.
- Fighting between ENDF and TPLF ground troops South West from Mekelle around Samre.
- There was also fighting between ENDF and TPLF troops at Finariwa, near the Tigray Southern border with Amhara region on the way from Samre (Tigray) to Sekota (in Amhara region).
- Ongoing fighting between ENDF and TPLF along the winding road that climbs to Atsbi, starting from the outskirts of Wukro.
- Roads from Mekelle to Adwa and from Mekelle to Wukro were closed in the afternoon.
- Officially confirmed that around Shire, Tigray, an Airforce MiG-23 jet was downed by TPLF several weeks ago. The pilot Col Tango was buried in Bishoftu a few days ago.
- According to a local direct source, the town of Wukro has been targeted or attacked by 216 bombs.
- Local sources say that there was no killing in the church in Tashi. However local sources state that there were 'a lot of killings' in Hagere Selam and Halah and Ala'isa on the way from Mekele to Hagere Selam.
- The ENDF has reported that it has captured containers, vehicles of rockets and missiles of the TPLF.

Reported regional situation

- Refugees interviewed in Hamdayet refugee camp (Sudan), declared that 250 people from a single village, Adi Aser, in Tigray were forcefully abducted to Eritrea by Eritrean soldiers in November. (AP)

Situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 30 December)

- The World Food Programme delivered food to 35.000 Eritrean refugees in May Ayni and Adi Harush in Tigray, but not to Shemelba and Hitstats camps with tens of thousands of refugees without support.
- Safety missions have been sent by the UN to Shemelba and Hitsats camps.
- Not all banks were open in Mekelle. Only a few government owned branches in the center were opened. Only depositing is possible. There is no explanation why they are only open for deposits.
- Tigray Prosperity Party Mekelle Head office has commenced work today.
- Dashen Beer branch manager in Adigrat, Isayas Asgedom was murdered along with his entire family. He was in a church outside Edaga Hamus. His son (Alula) was detained in Addis.

- Artist Henok Aregawi was killed in Adigrat allegedly by Eritrean troops. One of his songs is titled "peace to my country Ethiopia".
- A courthouse in Humera had been turned into a 'slaughterhouse', allegedly by Amhara militia. (AP)
- The AP reports from Sudan refugee camps that Tigrayan refugees are now arriving from areas deeper in Tigray. These refugees suffer from trauma, some gunshot wounds, starvation and dehydration.
- An NPR reporter visited a refugee camp in Sudan with many survivors of the Mai Kadra incident. According to the testimonies, on November 9, "at about 3:00 a.m., men started rampaging through Mai-Kadra." The witness states: "She saw them when she opened the door to her house. (...) They were young men like the ones here at this camp. She says the militants threatened ethnic Tigrayans like her." The reporter finds that government related militia were explicitly alleged as perpetrators in addition to potential other perpetrators. 700 people are estimated to have been killed in the massacre.
- The NPR report points to intimidation of interviewees and finds that ethnic violence between Tigray and Amhara refugees is high. The UNHCR has separated both groups to calm the situation.
- AP reports that refugees find the area around the reception center in Sudan near the border with Ethiopia (Tigray) "unsafe": stating that Amhara militia fighters threaten the refugees.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 30 December)

- Two officials of the Benishangul Gumuz region were arrested in relation to a "security problem" of the Metekel Zone: Mr. Atinkut Shitu - Chief Administrator of Metekel zone and Inspector Misgana Enjifeta - Deputy police commissioner of Benishangul Gumuz region.
- Members of the Benishangul Gumuz Regional State Council have unanimously voted to revoke the immunity of four members. Those four members are: Adgo Amsaya, former vice president of Benishangul Gumuz regional state; Shiferaw Chelibo, former Director General of the region's Science and Technology Agency; Arega Balbid, former leadership of Metekel zone; and Girma Meni, member.
- Three of the officials were arrested in connection with the massacre in Bekuji Kebele, Bulen Woreda, Metekel zone in which more than 200 civilians were killed. The regional government said they were suspected of involvement and negligence to discharge their responsibility.

Reported International dimension (as confirmed per 30 December)

- The US top diplomat on African Affairs, Tibor Nagy, expressed extreme concern "by continuing reports of intimidation of journalists in Ethiopia. U.S. resolve to see media freedom respected remains unshaken." These comments come following the arrest of a Reuters cameraman.
- The EU calls for investigation into 'ethnically targeted' violence in Ethiopia.
- Foreign nationals describe the many difficulties they encountered in leaving Tigray and Ethiopia. To reach Addis Ababa, they were bused out through Afar. They were profiled as being originally from Tigray. One was almost taken off the plane bound for London.
- The WHO chief Dr. Tedros Adhanom, expressed his concern about the situation in Tigray. Like him, many other people around the world have difficulties contacting relatives or friends in Tigray.
- Two Ethiopian officials from the Derg regime, which preceded the Federal Ethiopian regime, have had their sentence commuted. They have been hiding inside the Italian Embassy in Addis Ababa since 1991. Italian authorities did not kick them out, citing the possibility for the death penalty.
- The Sudanese PM, Hamdok, has met with the local governor to discuss the refugee situation.

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<https://eritreahub.org/last-flight-from-tigray-two-young-womens-escape-from-the-war>

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 42 - 31 December 2020

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Military situation

- The TPFL broadcaster Dimtsi Woyanen (DW) reports victories by the TPLF including over the ENDF 4th brigade moving from Adwa through Edaga Arbi. The TPLF claims it ambushed them in Zongi, and 124 soldiers were killed, and 114 captured, as well as weapons, ammunition, vehicles and a 507 rocket.
- The TPLF also claims that it has captured ENDF colonel Alemu Semie, commander of the 4th brigade.
- Eritrean troops were blocked on the way from Ahsea around Ziban Guila, carrying large amounts of looted property. They took many casualties and were forced to turn back.
- According to DW the ENDF aligned forces are committing atrocities on civilians in Gijet, southern Tigray through heavy bombardment and killed 21 youth, including a 7 year old child.
- The economist has published an article which argues that there is mounting evidence of an Eritrean presence in Ethiopia. This "makes it harder to bring peace to Tigray".
- Eight hundred ENDF and Eritrean troops have gathered at the Trans Ethiopia PLC camp in Mekelle. They reportedly retreated from Agula and May Mekden. Their commander is severely wounded.
- Eritrean soldiers in Tigray have reportedly only passed through, and have not occupied any positions.
- Pictures show that medical equipment and pharmacies of health centers in Wukro, Negash, Idagahamus and Adigrat towns were completely destroyed and looted - allegedly by Eritrean troops.
- Tsedale Lemma (Addis Standard) states that: "No armed conflict in the world, much less politically complex as the one in Tigray, has ever been resolved without a roundtable negotiated settlement."

Reported Regional situation

- The Ethiopia crisis has a direct impact on South Sudan since Ethiopia is the major contributor of UNMISS and UNISFA-Abyei. Ethiopia is the head of the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangement Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (CTSAMM) and has a reasonable contribution of forces under CTSAMM. The crisis in Ethiopia is affecting its ability to engage with South Sudan.
- Refugees report they were hunted down by militia trying to escape to Sudan fleeing without anything.

Reported International dimension

- A Dutch humanitarian organization ZOA staff member is killed in Tigray, Ethiopia. The 52 year old staff member was murdered during the recent conflict while on duty in Hitsats refugee camp.
- United Nations Human Rights Chief, Bachelet, demands access to the whole of Tigray.
- Egypt's Ministry of Foreign Affairs summons the Ethiopian chargé d'affaires to Cairo to clarify statements by the Ethiopian Foreign Ministry's spokesperson on Egypt's internal affairs.

- An AU initiated negotiation on the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam is scheduled for Sunday. Agreement was almost reached in 2020, but fell through. The outcome of the negotiations will be influenced by the dispute on land-ownership at the Ethiopia-Sudan border, fueling conflict.
- The UN has reiterated its Human Rights chief's demands for access to the whole of Tigray.
- Article in Foreign Affairs points out that PM Abiy is facing a legitimacy issue with ethnic tensions rising all over Ethiopia, causing a precarious situation. The article finds the conflict in Tigray is not over.
- US Council on Foreign Relations writes that misinformation and suppression of free speech erodes the credibility of PM Abiy.

Situation in Tigray

- Sources state that the church in Yeha, an archeological site, was looted, allegedly by Eritrean troops.
- Sources state that the school in Yeha, where many were taking shelter, was bombed. No information on casualties. Eritrean troops reportedly moved from Adwa through Yeha without occupying it.
- Sources state that there were killings in the *village* of Tashi (27-29/12). Federal soldiers started killing young men in the settlement area after they did not receive information about the whereabouts of TPLF leadership and militias. Tashi is located near Samre, where fighting has been taking place.
- Money transfers via Western Union and Moneygram are possible in Mekelle since 29/12. It is not clear whether people can access their regular accounts.
- Internet and mobile services remain cut in most of Tigray. While services have been partially returned to Mekelle, large areas of Tigray remain cut off.
- VICE reported on interviews with refugees in Sudan stating that civilians were not warned, prepared and protected. Civilian houses and people in their homes were shelled during the bombardment.
- In another interview, a refugee from Tigray in Sudan reported seeing people killed and "slaughtered", he saw many dead bodies on the way and stated that many died on the way.
- VICE also reported that militias are blocking refugees from Tigray to reach Sudan. Refugees are now crossing Sudan through the Eritrean border with Sudan and also through Ethiopian farmlands.

Situation in Ethiopia

- Over 20 Eritrean refugees fleeing from tigray, were arrested by federal police in Addis Ababa (30/12).
- The Ethiopian Red Cross reported that 207 people were killed in the attack at around 04:00 local time (23/12) in the village of Bekoji in Bulen county in the Metekel zone (Benishangul-Gumuz region).
- ENDF chief now in charge of Benishangul-Gumuz, says 50 perpetrators of the massacre are captured.
- 97.000 people have been displaced as a result of ethnic violence in Benishangul-Gumuz.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 42 - 2 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Military situation (as confirmed per 2 January 2021)

- Multiple sources state that Eritrean soldiers are blocked in attempts to leave Tigray. Heavy fighting between Ethiopia National Defense Forces (ENDF) and Tigray Defense Forces (TDF) is taking place near the major roads out to Eritrea. This has stopped the Eritrean transfer of looted goods out of the region.
- A source says that the ENDF is handing Shire, Tigray, to Eritrean troops. Eritrean telecom is servicing the area. Some people received calls. The Shire area hosts 100.000 Eritrean refugees.
- A source states that the Tigray Egela Woreda (including Gerhu-Sirnay, Semhal, May-Hamato, Leyto, Endaba-Estifanos, and Gere'a), on the border with Eritrea, is occupied by Eritrean soldiers and Eritrean telecom is providing full coverage. Citizens made calls, using phones of Eritrean troops.
- The TPLF says that it has shot down an ENDF airforce gunship on 30/12 8:30.
- Belgian TV shows footage of dozens of "shot-up army vehicles".
- Reports of rape of Tigray women as part of the violence carried out on civilians in Tigray.
- Sudan has declared that it achieved control of its territory occupied by Ethiopian farmers after several weeks of fighting in the area. Ethiopian Minister of Foreign Affairs accused Sudan of sending troops into Ethiopia, which is denied by Sudan. Negotiations between the countries broke down last week.

Regional situation (as confirmed per 2 January 2021)

- Egypt reported that the statement of the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Dina Mufti, was "totally unacceptable". The statement held that Egypt "has turned Ethiopia into a threat", a statement that was related to the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.
- Egypt will hire an international law firm to protect investments, states Alaa Al-Saqati, head of the Egyptian Industrial Zone in Ethiopia, to initiate a case before international courts against Ethiopia.
- Al Shabaab and the Somalia ISIS branch have been emboldened after Ethiopia and the US withdrew a significant numbers of troops. The terrorist organisations state that they will disrupt elections planned for early 2021. There are fears of suppression and low turnout.
- The government and opposition in Somalia are in disagreement on the election preparations. The President has been accused by the opposition of "stacking" election committees with loyalists.
- There are concerns about the severe coronavirus restrictions in Eritrea. Sources say people have described the restrictions as a death sentence as they have no food. The rules do not apply to soldiers.
- Representatives of Ethiopia forced 179 truck drivers from the Tigrayan company EFFORT to hand the trucks over to the Ethiopian government. Amharic and Tigray drivers were separated. The drivers refused, but were brought to camps and forced to hand over the keys of the trucks.

Situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 2 January 2021)

- UN risk assessment team has reportedly not been able to travel outside Mekelle. According to a report they feared the Ethiopian security forces were surveilling their work.
- Aid agencies say that they are still largely unable to access the rest of Tigray. No communications, damaged infrastructure and government restrictions have stopped them from reaching most areas in Tigray. The Ethiopian government is still refusing full access.
- Students from the University of Adigrat have been transferred to Mekelle University. The other institutions in Tigray, have all been looted. Mekelle remains the only functional university in Tigray.
- Many houses have been completely looted. Utensils, valuables, and furniture have been taken. VOA Tigrigna has also reported that investments worth billions of Birr have been destroyed and looted in the southern areas of Tigray.
- ENDF soldiers have rounded up youth in Mekelle and these were taken to an unknown location.
- Report that the transitional Tigray government (Prosperity Party) is intimidating scholars of Mekelle University to join the Prosperity Party and to take a position in the transitional government appointed by the Federal Ethiopian government.
- The elected government of Tigray (TPLF) states on its station DW that it will act against Tigrinians working with the transitional government appointed by the Federal Ethiopian government.
- Trucks owned by the Tigray EFFORT company were taken to Addis Ababa by the Ethiopian government.

Situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 2 January 2021)

- No evidence has been presented against the Reuters cameraman arrested on thursday 24 december. He will be held until January 8th, pending investigation.
- More reports of ethnic profiling and harassment against Tigrayans, including at Bole airport.
- 310 people were arrested in Ethiopia for causing disputes between the Ale and Konso communities in South Ethiopia. The conflict between the communities was quelled after traditional reconciliation. The communities are now helping each other rebuild their homes. Traditional law can help settle disputes.
- The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) released a report on the killings that took place in June following the assassination of the Oromo musician Hachalu Hundessa's June 29th. 123 people were killed in the violence, 75 were killed by Ethiopian security forces. Many more were wounded and displaced as a result. The EHCR report finds that Crimes against Humanity took place by groups perpetrating the massacre.
- Witnesses interviewed by the EHCR stated that sometimes police watched and did not intervene while attacks were taking place.
- The EHCR said that they "did not find any indication of ongoing efforts to investigate the use of force by security officers during the unrest and to hold to account those who caused unnecessary human suffering".
- The report noted that "crimes against humanity of this nature combined with the current national context are signs that the risk of atrocity crimes, including genocide, is increasing". They call for investigation and "a lasting institutional solution."

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 44 - 3 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Military situation (as confirmed per 2 January 2021)

- The TPLF is keeping control of mountainous areas in Tigray. As many analysts predicted when Mekelle was taken, the ENDF has had difficulties driving the TPLF out of well entrenched mountain positions.
- The ENDF has launched an offensive towards Samre, East of Mekelle.
- Reported cruelties against civilians include forcing relatives to commit incest on women and girls under the threat of arbitrary execution.
- Report that 150 civilians were hiding in a church in Edagahamus, Tigray. They were, reportedly, brutally killed. It is estimated that 300 civilians were killed in Edagahamus and surrounding.
- Many towns in Tigray have been attacked by ENDF and Eritrean troops by heavy artillery. The towns include: Humera, Shire, Aksum, Adwa, Adigrat, Wukro, Mekelle, Hewane, Workamba, Abi Adi, and Hagerselam. In these operations innocent civilians were attacked.
- In Mekelle, Tigray, there were air strikes and bombings on Saint George church, two Mekelle university campuses and 'adishimdehun', kebeles 03, 05, 11, 14 & 15, 'Enda Gebriel', '70 kare', and 'Latchi'.
- Abi Adi, Tigray, and its outskirts, has been hit by airstrikes on civilian neighbourhoods for one week.
- It is reported that 1000 civilians were killed in attacks on Aksum town and 500 civilians in Wukro.
- It is reported that hundreds of civilians were killed in smaller towns of Hazwzen, Digum and Nebelet.
- Pictures are emerging of the heavily damaged Al Negash Mosque in Tigray. There are clear signs of shelling. It was first reported that the mosque had been destroyed on 18 december. Reportedly, the mosque was first bombed and later looted by Ethiopian and Eritrean troops.
- The Al Negash Mosque is thought to be the oldest mosque in Africa, dating back to the 7th century. It is a UNESCO world Heritage site and was recently restored. People died trying to protect the mosque.
- Foreign Minister Demeke, Ethiopia, rejects the TPLF-claim to have carried out a pre-emptive strike.
- TPLF stated it was provoked on 3 Nov when the Ethiopian government sent commandos in an Antonov and/or cargo plane, under pretext of delivering new banknotes, allegedly with the intention to capture the Tigray regional government, which was assembled in a meeting in Planet hotel in Mekelle.

Regional situation (as confirmed per 2 January 2021)

- The US carried out drone strikes on an Al Shabaab operated radio station. No casualties were reported.
- Sudan has announced that it is redeploying more troops to the Sudan-Ethiopian border.
- The UN peacekeeping mission to Darfur in Sudan, ongoing since 2003, has ended. 800 Ethiopian soldiers helping with policing the area are returning home. Sudanese security forces will be taking over. Protests have been taking place urging for the continuation of the mission.

- The Ethiopian Border Affairs Commission (EBAC) has released a statement that all Sudanese forces should leave Ethiopian soil immediately. They condemn the Sudanese aggression and the destruction of property, looting and killings of Sudanese forces in the disputed region.
- EBAC warns that unlike in previous clashes, this time regular Sudanese military played an important role in operations. This creates a “destabilizing” regional environment.
- The EBAC called for the withdrawal of Sudanese troops and the Ethiopian government to deploy troops to protect the farmers.

Situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 2 January 2021)

- The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission reported that individuals wanting to leave the country now need to show their ID, which shows an ethnic classification of each citizen.
- Tigrayans at airports are being asked whether they participated in the election on 9 September. Fana, the Ethiopian state broadcaster reported that an Ethiopian airlines employee of Tigrayan origin had been charged with assisting in the organising of the election. Another Tigrayan, a manager at the state company Ethiotelecom has also been accused of participating in the election as a voter.
- The ENDF has released a list of TPLF groups and cells that have been destroyed. They include many high ranking officers as well as a former minister. A law professor at the university of Mekelle has also been arrested for allegedly creating agitation and unrest.
- Ethnic harassment continues to take place. The New York Times (NYT) reported earlier that Tigrayans had their houses sacked by police. These have not been isolated events.
- Tigrayan businesses have been targeted by ethnic profiling. Companies are having their finances investigated, others closed. The CEO of Ethiopian Airlines, among executives and employees, has been put under house arrest for communicating with the TPLF.
- The NYT reported earlier three foreign diplomats from different embassies have said that they had to search for new security contractors after a Tigrayan security company had been suspended.
- State companies are conducting purges of employed Tigrayans. Employees are detained by police.
- The NYT also reported earlier that the purge is taking place within the armed forces. Tigrayans in the ENDF have had their phones confiscated and were then put under arrest.
- The Ethiopian Attorney General (AG) Gedion has said that there have been a few “isolated incidents”. The government is taking the issue seriously. A hotline will be set up to report complaints.
- 27 people were killed by gunmen in Oromia. It is unclear who committed these shootings, although there have been some accusations that government forces were involved.

International Situation (as confirmed per 2 January 2021)

- The Ethiopian Diaspora group ED-REAP released a press statement including 5 demands: immediate withdrawal of foreign forces, a UN mandated investigation into war crimes, full access for independent media, full and unfettered access for humanitarian aid groups, and access to organisations helping with rehabilitation of Tigray.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 45 - 4 January 2021

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Military situation (as confirmed per 3 January 2021)

- The Federally appointed provisional mayor of Mekelle, Mr. Atakilti Hailelassie, has urged for the immediate withdrawal of Eritrean Troops from Tigray. This is the first time Ethiopian Federally appointed officials have officially admitted that Eritrean soldiers are involved in operations in Tigray.
- Eritrean military captain Gubssa Kahsay has died. Sources in Tigray state he died during operations with Tigray Defence Forces in Tigray. In Eritrea, EritTV broadcasted his death caused by illness. In the past few weeks, at least five high ranking Eritrean military have died from illness, according to authorities.
- Report of shooting among Ethiopia National Defense Forces (ENDF) soldiers in a meeting held at Meles Zenawi Academy in Mekelle, Tigray. Federal Ethiopia Prosperity Party military officials ordered federal police and military forces, who are patrolling Mekelle, to fight the Tigray Defense Forces (TDF) in mountainous areas where TDF are engaging guerilla warfare. Forces refused to take the order and argued they came to Mekelle to keep peace, order and arrest TPLF leadership; not to engage in a fight with TDF. Dozens were wounded and are receiving medical treatment at Ayder Hospital.
- ENDF formations are reportedly gathering around Mekelle, Tigray, and surrounding towns (including in Qwiha, where shots were fired on 3 January).
- Sudanese military intelligence has said it has arrested 45 TPLF fighters arriving in Sudan.
- Eritrean soldiers in Tigray select people with relatives abroad. They select them by offering people to call relatives. Those with relatives abroad are then detained. The relatives overseas are subsequently extorted for money, with the threat that the relatives will be killed. This has been reported in Rama and other places. Eritrea is involved in abductions for ransom extortion in Sudan and Libya and previously in Egypt.
- Report of severe violence against women: "countless number of women" are victims of physical and sexual abuse and rape, including gang rape. Some of these acts are aggravated by other forms of brutality like shooting victims or mutilating them with knives.
- In Mekelle many women are asking for a post pill as a precaution for avoiding unwanted pregnancy.
- Report that women are kidnapped and taken by armed forces from different parts of the region without any information of their whereabouts. Call made for urgent investigation.
- *Unconfirmed report* that ethnic Tigray Ethiopians in peacekeeping missions abroad have been redeployed to the Ethiopian-Sudan border and that two Eritrean divisions are surveilling this operation.

Regional situation (as confirmed per 3 January 2021)

- The Sudanese army deputy of staff has said that Sudan will restore sovereignty over the entire al-Fashqa region which is occupied by ethnic Amhara Ethiopian farmers.

- The dispute over the area of the al Fashaqa on the Ethiopia-Sudan area is rooted in colonial times. Land in use by Ethiopian farmers belongs to Sudan. A compromise was reached in 2008: Ethiopia would acknowledge the legal status of the border, while Sudan would allow the Ethiopian farmers to live there. The status of the agreement has recently been challenged.
- The Egyptian President Al-Sisi has spoken with the Sudanese Chairman of the Sovereignty Council, Al Burhan, stressing "Egypt's support to Sudan across all fields".
- An agreement reached between the US and Sudan. The US will provide 111 million US\$ to pay off bilateral debt, 120 million US\$ to help pay the IMF, and 700 million US\$ for budgetary assistance.
- The Sudanese finance minister announced the aid would help Sudan to clear its arrears with the World Bank, and make it eligible for the IMF Highly Indebted Poor Countries Programme.
- Negotiations on the Ethiopian GERD dam restarted Sunday under chairmanship of . Representatives of the AU, Ethiopia, Egypt, and Sudan, were in attendance. The meeting was held virtually. The meeting collapsed because Egypt refused to accept a paper put on the table for discussion.
- According to the Ethiopian State Broadcaster Fana, most of the issues regarding the filing and annual operations of the dam are agreed. The differences are about future water development projects on the Abbay Basin and on the "co-relations between the GERD Guidelines and Rules ".
- The number of Tigrayan refugees in Sudan has grown to 61.000. It is estimated 1200 pregnant women are in the camps.
- Refugees in Um Rakoba camp clashed. There have been high tensions between refugees of different ethnic groups. According to the Sudantribune, aid workers have been avoiding these camps as a result.

Situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 3 January 2021)

- There are concerns about the increase in violence in Ethiopia. The number of massacres that have been taking place in the last months has been increasing in regularity. The Federal government is being confronted with multiple crises at once.
- The OLF, an insurgency mainly fighting in the region of Oromia, has reportedly "graduated" hundreds of new fighters. Recent months have seen a surge in violence in the region.
- Electricity is still not available in the vast majority of Tigray. Satellite images show many towns without lights.

International Situation (as confirmed per 3 January 2021)

- The UNHCR is concerned about the reported forced repatriation of Eritrean refugees from Addis Ababa to Tigray. Many Eritreans fleeing the conflict in Tigray have been forced to return to the camps they left in november. UNHCR is requesting access to all facilities at which refugees are being held.
- The ENDF has left the Shire area, where the Eritrean refugees in Tigray are hosted, reportedly under control of Eritrean troops and this area is not safe for Eritrean refugees who fled Eritrea.
- It was further announced that Eritrean refugees will not be allowed outside of camps without a pass.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 46 - 5 January 2021

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Military situation (as confirmed per 4 January 2021)

- Clashes between Ethiopia and Sudan ended last week, after the Ethiopian army withdrew away from the border.
- More sources are saying that the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) is retreating from rural areas in Tigray towards the capital Mekelle. This corroborates earlier sources.
- Fighting continues to take place around Mekelle. Shelling has been observed near Hagere Selam, 50 kilometers from the regional capital.
- Civilians are afraid of ENDF soldiers as they are said to take revenge on civilians after losing a battle.
- Mechanised infantry of the ENDF is being moved to Tigray, and is heading to Mekelle.
- Satellite pictures show that many fields surrounding the ENDF Northern Command HQ have been burned. In total 12 ha of land has been set on fire.

Regional situation (as confirmed per 4 January 2021)

- The negotiations on the GERD dam between Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia have collapsed after Sudan did not attend. Sudan wants to give a greater role to AU experts and observers to facilitate negotiations and reconcile opinions. The EU, US, and AU are observing the talks.
- A Sudanese radio station has reported that Amhara militias kidnapped and killed herders in Sudan. A source told the radio that "the incident is just part of a series of killings and kidnappings carried out by Ethiopian shifita gangs, supported by Ethiopian government forces."
- The Sudanese government has opened a new refugee camp for Tigrayan refugees. This new camp, in Gedaref state, has a capacity of 30 thousand. 500 refugees are being transferred every day.
- An outbreak of coronavirus in one of the refugee camps has slowed down the transfer of refugees to the new camp.
- Egypt and Sudan have increased cooperation to crack down on the Muslim Brotherhood. It includes training in the tolerance of Islam, promoting anti extremist discourse, and a joint missionary convoy.

Situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 4 January 2021)

- FEWSNET, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network, released its outlook for the coming months (up to May 2021), predicting large food insecurity across Ethiopia. Half the territory will be in the stress or crisis phase. Current and programmed international humanitarian aid are already included in the model.
- In Tigray, food security will likely remain at crisis levels until May.

- Swarms of locusts have caused large scale damages between October and December. Up to 60% of crops were lost as a result. Many eggs are now hatching in the Somali region. They will remain a threat in the coming months.
- FEWSNET predicts below average rainfall in most regions. This will likely result in smaller crop yields and have a negative impact on food security. Low rainfall also encourages locust swarm formation.
- The Amhara Chief Commissioner of Police, Abere Adamu, has given a speech on the involvement of Amhara forces in the conflict with Tigray. According to him, Amhara special forces played an important role in positioning ENDF forces prior to the conflict. The President of Amhara was allegedly also aware that a conflict was going to take place.
- Amhara continued playing an important role in coordinating and guiding ENDF forces, he stated.
- The Amhara Commissioner also said that “deployment of forces had taken place in our borders from east to west. The war started that night, after we have already completed our preparations” implying that the involvement of the Amhara special forces had been prepared and was well on the way before the start of military operations on 4 November 2020.

Situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 4 January 2021)

- A preliminary report by the interim Tigray administration has been released on the damages of the conflict in the region. According to their assessment 4.5 million people need humanitarian assistance. Many houses have been completely destroyed, and 2.2 million people have been internally displaced (IDPs). Half of these IDPs come from Western Tigray.
- The status of 78% of the health facilities in Tigray is unknown. Many of the hospitals have been potentially destroyed or pillaged.
- At the start of the conflict Tigray counted 40 hospitals and 296 ambulances. The report assesses that only 31 ambulances, in four hospitals, remain. The remaining ambulances were stolen or destroyed.
- The University of Mekelle has at least partially been looted. Pictures show that the offices of the College of Veterinary Medicine have been destroyed.
- A delegation from Mekelle University is reportedly in Addis Ababa negotiating the future of the university. Discussions are taking place about the functioning of the university and the take over of Adigrat University students and staff. Future international partnerships are also being discussed.
- Many people in Mekelle fear leaving their houses. They fear being forcefully conscripted into the army.
- Checkpoints have been set up in Tigray, complicating movement in the area.
- A source has said that 150 civilians have been killed by Eritrean soldiers near Nebelet town. This would include 4 muslims guarding the local mosque (at Adi Argudi).

International Situation (as confirmed per 4 January 2021)

- The British minister for Africa, James Duddridge, has said that the UK government is deeply worried about the situation in Tigray and the wider region. The British government continues to raise the importance of the respect for human rights with the Ethiopian government. The UK also works with other regional actors to find a peaceful solution.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 47 - 6 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Military situation (as confirmed per 5 January 2021)

- The Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) claims that it has killed 100 ENDF soldiers near Abraha Atsbeha, North of Mekelle. It also claims to have destroyed 2 tanks.
- A source reports that heavy fighting is taking place between TPLF and Eritrean combatants near Endabaguna and Kisdagaba. Reportedly TPLF forces launched an attack on looting Eritrean soldiers. Endabaguna is the location of the reception center for refugees from Eritrea in Central Tigray.
- Tigray Media House reported that a senior ENDF officer died of his wounds in Hospital. Colonel Dejene was ambushed by TPLF while traveling from Maychew to Korem two weeks ago.
- Additional ENDF forces moving to Tigray reportedly consist of 8 tanks and troops in vehicles.
- Pictures have appeared online, identified as Eritrean soldiers in Idaga Hamus (allegedly).

Regional situation (as confirmed per 5 January 2021)

- The Prosperity Party Chair of Tigray, the ruling party of Ethiopia, has become the second official to confirm that there are Eritrean troops in Tigray. In a statement on Tigray Television, the regional broadcast, Nebeye Sehul said that Eritrean soldiers fighting in Tigray were probably deserters seeking better lives in Ethiopia. Nebeye says that the government is investigating.
- Reported that on the 38th Extraordinary Assembly by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) there was an expectation that Ethiopian PM Abiy would invite the AU Commission Chair Moussa Faki Mahamat to visit Tigray. The trip, however, had to be erased from the final communique. Ethiopia rejects "any foreign intervention" in a crisis that it says is purely domestic.
- The Communique of the IGAD 38th Assembly welcomed the agreement by Ethiopia of 29th November 2020 allowing "unimpeded, sustained and secure access" for humanitarian support. Such "unimpeded access" has not yet been realised, despite UN and humanitarian organisations urging they need access.
- The United Nations says that access to Tigray has improved slightly, but it remains critically challenged. Insecurity and bureaucracy are constraining the aid that can be provided. It has been able to access the main cities, but cannot access rural areas and Hitsats and Shimelba refugee camps.
- The UN reports that in East Sudan the first refugees have been transferred from the Village 8 reception centre to the new camp in Tunaydbah, Sudan. Um Rakuba camp has approached full capacity.
- UNHCR spokesperson, Andrej Mahedic, states that more than 30% of the refugees arriving from Ethiopia are minors, younger than 18, whilst 5% are elderly, older than 60.
- The head of Egypt's intelligence service has met with the Sudanese Prime Minister Hamdok as well as the Head of Sudan's Sovereign Council, General Al-Burhan. They discussed regional developments and

the GERD dam negotiations. President Al-Sisi of Egypt and Al-Burhan also spoke on the phone on Monday.

- Eritrean Minister of Information, Yemane Meskel, informs that Minister of Foreign Affairs, Osman Saleh and Presidential Adviser, Yemane Ghebreab, met Sudan's Head of the Sovereign Council, General Al-Burhan, delivering a message of President Afewerki.
- In a press conference Ethiopian Foreign Affairs Minister and Vice President Demeke has said that Ethiopia wants to resolve the conflict with Sudan peacefully. According to him, the clashes in November and December have not changed the strong relationship between both countries.
- The status of the GERD dam negotiations remains unclear. Sudan has not yet returned to the negotiation table.

Situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 5 January 2021)

- Ethiopian police have released the Reuters cameraman that was arrested a couple weeks ago. No charges have been filed against him.
- VP Demeke said that the government is currently taking measures to provide food and other supplies to Tigray. He also said that reconstruction efforts are on the way and that telecommunication lines are being restored to the whole region. Telecom, electricity, and full banking access will soon start again.
- VP Demeke has also said that planning for a 6th general election is on the way in Tigray. The federally appointed interim government has been tasked with organizing it. Opposition parties have been invited to participate.
- The Ethiopian National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) has arrested 21 individuals for issuing travel documents illegally. Most of them worked at the Bole Airport.

Situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 5 January 2021)

- A witness has told federal broadcaster ETV that Amanuel Church was shelled. Civilians were seeking shelter inside and were killed as a result of the attack. Amanuel is near the UNESCO site Negash Mosque, Africa's oldest mosque, which was severely damaged in December as a result of shelling.
- A list has been published on-line, claiming to contain the names of civilian victims of the war in Tigray. The list has 440 entries and has been assembled using information from different sources. Many of the deaths have not been (officially) confirmed.

International Situation (as confirmed per 5 January 2021)

- The US Secretary of the Treasury Mnuchin is due to visit Khartoum on 6 January. The aim of the visit is to review the economic situation, as well as the US assistance to Sudan. Mnuchin will also visit other countries in the region such as Egypt, Qatar and Israel.
- The UN estimates that more than 322 thousand people are Internally Displaced (IDP). The provisional Tigrayan government reported yesterday that it believed there were 2.2 million IDPs.
- The UN says health facilities outside cities are not operational, while those in cities are in critical need of supplies.
- The UNHCR has stated that it needs 156 million US\$ to meet immediate needs of refugees in Ethiopia, but only US\$ 40 million has been pledged.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 47 - 07 January 2021

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Military situation (as confirmed per 6 January 2021)

- A video has emerged of the head of the Ethiopian Northern Command, General Belay, saying that the Eritrean Soldiers in Tigray had not been invited and were undesirable. It is the latest statement by an Ethiopian Federal official which confirms the presence of Eritrean troops in Tigray.
- The General Belay is blaming the TPLF for starting the conflict and stopping the ENDF from guarding the border against Eritrean intrusion. Eritrea has provided major support to ENDF forces during the invasion of Tigray. This has been confirmed by the Ethiopian government as well.
- Satellite images have spotted fires near Hitsats refugee camp in central Tigray. Fighting has been reported in the area, including between Tigrayan and Eritrean forces.
- Fighting between ENDF-allied forces and Tigray regional forces has also been reported near Inda Aba Guna, near Shire, Tigray.
- Further fighting between the ENDF and Tigrayan forces has closed the road between Mekoni and Mekelle. According to reports, several buses filled with ENDF soldiers were ambushed.
- Sudanese and Ethiopian forces have clashed in the contested border region again. The Sudanese army says it repulsed two attacks carried out by Ethiopian forces. They specifically praised Sudanese paratroopers for repelling the attack.
- The Sudanese army says that the attacks were carried out by the regular Ethiopian army. They say heavy weaponry was used during the attacks and so they have ruled out miliamen as the assailants. Sudan also says it has captured an Ethiopian soldier.

Regional situation (as confirmed per 6 January 2021)

- The Ethiopian boundary commission has accused Sudan of breaching the agreement. Both countries have also accused each other of beginning the conflict. Both have also said that they want a peaceful resolution of the conflict.
- The new round of GERD dam negotiations seem to have failed. The first meeting on Sunday 3 Jan has so far been the only one that has taken place. Sudan has demanded a greater role for AU experts.
- Egypt has reaffirmed the need to reach an agreement before the summer.

Situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 6 January 2021)

- The interim mayor of Mekelle, who recently made comments about Eritrean soldiers having to leave Tigray, has said that he was merely repeating the comments of General Belay. Another official, Mulu Nega, has said that the interim mayor did not have the authority to discuss the situation and that "corrective measures" had been taken.

- The BBC reported that the government had pledged to repair the shelled Al Negash mosque. It was recently restored by Turkey and severely damaged in December by artillery shelling.
- A convoy transporting 35 tons of relief supplies arrived in Mekelle on Friday.
- Photos have emerged of the looted hospital in Adwa. Hospitals in Tigray are running out of supplies.
- January 7th is Christmas according to the coptic calendar. Prime Minister Abiy, and many religious leaders have been holding speeches to celebrate the holiday.

Situation in refugees (as confirmed per 6 January 2021)

- Eritrean opposition broadcast, Radio Erena, is reporting that Ethiopian authorities are refusing permits to leave (exit permits) for hundreds of Eritrean refugees. These refugees are mostly part of family reunion programmes and have been approved by the IOM. It is not clear why the exit is being refused.
- The International Rescue Committee (IRC) has said that many new refugees are arriving in Sudan. The many more refugees has resulted in overcrowding in Um Rakuba. They require more resources to ensure proper health standards and avoid epidemics of diseases, including Covid-19.
- The IRC says that there are an unusually high number of unaccompanied children among the refugees. The IRC is enacting better protection programmes to take care of them. Children are especially at high risk of exploitation. They are often severely traumatized as well.
- The SudanTribune reported that the ENDF has deployed more troops to the Sudanese border to prevent refugees from crossing over into Sudan. Ethiopian refugees in Sudan currently exceed 63 thousand.
- The Norwegian Refugee Council Director in Sudan, William Carter, corroborates this and says that Ethiopia is also pushing Sudan for immediate repatriation of civilians that did manage to get to Sudan.
- The Ethiopian minister of foreign affairs spokesman has said that the last details are being worked on with regards to repatriation of refugees from Sudan to Ethiopia. The spokesman said that it will start soon. Many refugees in Sudan have stated to media that they will not go back and will not feel safe.

International Situation (as confirmed per 6 January 2021)

- US Treasury Secretary Mnuchin has met with Prime Minister Hamdok, the Chairman of the Sovereign Council General al-Burham and various other ministers. They discussed economic opportunities for Sudan through the Abraham Accords, Sudanese debt repayment and the GERD dam negotiations.
- The Abraham accords were signed between Israel, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and other arabic countries in the region. Sudan officially joined the accords on 6 January, paving the way for normalisation of relations between Israel and Sudan.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 47 - 08 January 2021

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Military situation (as confirmed per 7 January 2021)

- Reported that ethnic Tigray soldiers being suspended and/or returned from Ethiopian peace-keeping missions are imprisoned by the Ethiopian Federal Government.
- Reported that ethnic Tigrayan military attachés in Ethiopian diplomatic services abroad are sacked.
- Reported that Eritrean soldiers were ambushed by Tigrayan forces East of Wukro.
- Pictures have emerged of the ambush between Mekoni and Mekelle. Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) forces were ambushed by Tigray forces.
- Report that Eritrean forces occupy Hitsats town in Tigray and control the area, including a refugee camp which hosts 25.000 refugees from Eritrea. The camp has still not been reached by humanitarian organisations and refugees and communities have been without food supplies for over two months.
- The ENDF released the names of 9 senior TPLF members they have captured, according to the report.

Regional situation (as confirmed per 7 January 2021)

- An Eritrean delegation has met with the Chairman of the Sovereign Council Al-Burhan of Sudan. They discussed regional security and tried to strengthen bilateral ties and regional security. The Eritreans reportedly offered to mediate the conflict between Ethiopia and Sudan. Sudan rejected the offer.
- One of the leading African Constitutional and Human rights law experts, Paulos Tesfagiorgis, has argued that the peace process that the AU initiated to solve the conflict in Tigray was undermined by the AU Commission chairperson, Moussa Faki Mahamat, from the beginning. According to Tesfagiorgis, Mahamat was “blatantly partisan” and undermined the peacemaking process.
- Tesfagiorgis argues that the Chairperson’s position “violates the letter and spirit of the African Union and IGAD constitutive documents and numerous subsequent resolutions,..” Mahamat undermined any chances of peace and the principles that the regional and continental bodies pursue, he states.
- It was earlier reported that a proposal at the 38th Extraordinary Conference of IGAD for the AU Commission Chairperson, Mahamat, to visit Tigray was withdrawn from the communiqué.
- Tesfagiorgis also stated that “Today there is alarming news of starvation in Eritrea. The regime has politicized the issue of the virus and opted to use it as a weapons to starve and weaken the people by enforcing lockdown without the means to feed them.”

- Eritrea has taken complete lock-down measures. A source from Eritrea reported the COVID-spread is 'devastating', reporting that doctors, drivers and government officials have reportedly been infected.
- The UN fears that the recent conflict in Tigray has facilitated massive COVID-19 community transmission in Tigray. Other sources suggested the conflict has facilitated the spread across all involved regions, including Eritrea.
- Sudan has confirmed the arrival of more refugees from Ethiopia. The humanitarian official said that most refugees cross at night, to avoid military patrols on the border, stopping refugees from crossing.
- The Ethiopian government has denied that more Ethiopian troops had been placed on the border to prevent refugees from crossing into Sudan.
- The Council for the Arab States of the Gulf encourages members to cooperate with Sudan.
- No agreement has yet been reached on reopening negotiations on the GERD dam. Sudan and Egypt disagree on the role that AU experts should play during the negotiations.

Situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 7 January 2021)

- In its recent report crisis NGO ACAPS ranks humanitarian access in Ethiopia with Very High Access Constraints. Areas not under the control of the government remain inaccessible for humanitarian aid.
- ACAPS states that the border with Sudan has been partially closed since the Tigray conflict started.
- The associate director of Human Rights Watch has said that it is essential to allow unhindered access to Tigray. With estimations on the number of IDPs ranging from 200 thousand (by the UN) to over 2 million (by the interim Tigray government), it is important to have unhindered access to reach them.

Situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 7 January 2021)

- The majority of the displaced people in the area have returned home, but most of their belongings have been looted. The UN has observed massive damage and vandalism to public health centres. Infrastructure and other public buildings urgently need repairs.
- The UN has only provided food relief to Mekelle and Mai Ayni and Adi Harush refugee camps. It would appear that until now no food has been provided to the camps Shemelba and Hitsats, home to 50.000 Eritrean refugees. These have not received food since October last year.

International Situation (as confirmed per 7 January 2021)

- The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) held a virtual meeting on Wednesday. They discussed various challenges and initiatives for the promotion of peace and security. UN Chief Antonio Guterres expressed support for the AU "silence the guns" initiative. Liberia's former President, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, called on the Council to take bold steps towards ending conflicts.
- President Kenyatta of Kenya has laid out Kenya's agenda for its year tenure of a non-permanent UNSC seat. It includes a greater role for Africa and the Global South, COVID-19 vaccines for Africa, and a revitalised multilateralism aimed at strengthening global peace and security.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 50 - 09 January 2021

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Military situation (as confirmed per 08 January)

- The ENDF has announced that next to the nine officials that it captured, they have also killed four other Tigrayan officials. The officials killed are the TPLF spokesman, the former head of the Tigray finance bureau, and two other core members. The ENDF did not detail how the four men were killed.
- The ENDF reinforcements that were seen moving towards Mekelle at the beginning of the week have reached Alamata. The force consists of 8 tanks, 20 buses, and 5 heavy trucks.
- Heavy gunfire has been reported in Mekelle and its outskirts. Heavy artillery bombing was reported in Wukro, North of Mekelle.
- Report that Maryam Tsiyon Church has been attacked (local people believe with the aim to take the Ark of Covenant to Addis Ababa). Hundreds of people hiding in the Maryam Tsiyon Church were brought out and shot on the square in front. The number of people killed is reported as 750.
- Satellite images have detected a fire in Baeker, Humera. Fighting has been reported in that area.
- Reported in social media that the Sudanese army would have evidence of participation of Eritrean troops in the war between Ethiopia and Sudan over the disputed border area, Al-Fashqa.
- Reported that Eritrean troops are currently in all administrative zones in Tigray, except the Southern zone. This includes: Tekeze area, Adigoshu, Maywoini (Geyts), Fresalem (Edris), Adebay, Ousman, Jebel, Humera, Rawyan, Bereket (Western); Shire, Endebagina, Selekkeka, Adihageray, Adinebried, Sheraro, Semema (North Western); Wukro Maray, Aksum, Adwa, Rama, Egela, Zana (Central); Adigrat, Edaga Hamus, Wukro, Hawzen (Eastern).
- Extreme looting reported in the Gheralta area, and Hawzen has been seriously damaged ('destroyed').
- Another list of names of civilian victims in the districts of Gheralta and Enderta (Tigray) has emerged. Reportedly, the victims were killed by Eritrean troops. All the names on the list are of men.
- Reported that Eritrean soldiers use Ethiopian military uniforms as disguise but local people recognise them easily as they speak Tigrigna with an Eritrean accent. Mostly, especially in Western Tigray, the Eritrean troops are wearing the uniforms of the Eritrean army, according to reports.
- A second humanitarian worker from Dutch humanitarian NGO ZOA has also been killed in the Hitsats refugee camp, where heavy fighting is reported.
- According to the UN OCHA fighting in Tigray continues, among other locations, in the Mekelle Periphery, Shire, and Shiraro. The fighting has stopped the deployment of some of its missions.
- *Unconfirmed:* Sebhat Nega, 86, the co-founder of the TPLF, was arrested in a remote valley, together with defected officers from the Northern Command. Sebhat Nega, also referred to as 'Aboy Sebhat' ('father Sebhat') is a retired political intellectual, former director of the Tigray Endowment Fund and director of a think tank, the Foreign Relations Strategic Study Institute in Addis Ababa until 2018.

Reported Regional situation (as confirmed per 08 January)

- The Vice-Chairman of the Sudanese Sovereignty Council, General M.H. Dugalo ('Hemiti' or 'Hamediti') met with Eritrean President Isaias in Asmara on Friday. The visit followed accusations that Eritrea is involved in the war on the Ethiopia-Sudan border. The visit was reported as a failure.
- President Ramaphosa of South Africa has said that the AU appointed Special Envoys on Tigray will visit the Tigray area soon.
- President Kiir of South Sudan has called on the Sudanese government to reach a settled negotiation with Ethiopia. He made the comments following a meeting with al-Din Kabbashi, a member of the Sovereign Council, and Omer Gamar Eldin, the acting Sudanese Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Reported International dimension (as confirmed per 08 January)

- The Global Center for the Responsibility to Protect is urging states with significant military ties to Ethiopia, to withhold military assistance until all war crimes and human rights violations have been investigated, and their perpetrators held accountable.
- A demonstration has taken place in The Hague, the Netherlands, organised by Tigray and Eritrean members of the diaspora, demanding that Eritrean troops leave Tigray immediately.

Situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 08 January)

- UN OCHA states in a report that the situation in Tigray remains volatile. While, it believes that the situation has been improving, access to food, water, and medical supplies remains limited. The report has identified that looting of humanitarian supplies and equipment continues in some areas, including Kuiha and Lachi.
- The UN OCHA report identifies that 4.5 million people needing emergency assistance, of which 2.2 million IDPs. However only 77 thousand people in Mekelle and 25 thousand in Mai Ayni and Adi Harush refugee camps have received food support from the UN and its partners.
- UN OCHA reports that it still does not have access to Hitsats and Shimelba refugee camps. Bureaucratic constraints and lack of security has made it more difficult to access many areas of Tigray.
- Sources disagree with UN OCHA's assessment that things are going back to normal in Mekelle, Alamata, and Mehoni. Fighting has still been taking place in the area, and people are being prevented from leaving. Moreover, a critical lack of many supplies still exists in the area.
- Demtsi Woyane, DW, a TPLF aligned broadcast, has released further footage of a heavily looted buildings of Mekelle University. Multiple departments have been completely emptied.
- Since mid-November the accounts of EFFORT, the umbrella to which many companies in Tigray belong, have been frozen and reports show that its huge assets are now being 'redistributed' in Ethiopia.

Refugee Situation (as confirmed per 08 January)

- Ethiopian refugees in Sudan have told *The World* on their experiences in the conflict. A witness recounts how on his flight to Sudan he Ethiopian Federal Troops were accompanied by Eritrean soldiers. They proceeded to shoot his son twice and left him to die.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 51 - 10 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 09 January)

- The Ethiopian army has reportedly built a fence along the Sudanese border to stop refugees from Tigray from getting to Sudan. Reportedly Ethiopian presence on the Sudanese border has been growing. A Sudanese TV channel reported that refugees stopped crossing for the first time on Friday.
- Bloomberg reported that Satellite images show the destruction of UN facilities and other facilities in Hitsats and Shimeleba camps. The images indicate that the structures have been intentionally destroyed. Eritrean soldiers have been reported in the area, and many reports have surfaced of Eritrean soldiers killing refugees and other civilians and forcing refugees back to Eritrea.
- Shimeleba camp is now completely deserted and Eritrean refugees are deported to Eritrea. Especially young men.
- Fires have also been reported in Shimeleba and Hitsats refugee camps. In Hitsats there were 14 buildings on fire on January 5th and 55 other buildings have been damaged or destroyed. New fires have been detected since then.
- Ethiopian TV has reported that 300 refugees in Hitsats camp were executed by the TPLF. An anonymous source states: "The Hitsats story is a lie. Eritrean forces massively killed their own citizens in Hitsats refugee camp to punish them for leaving Eritrea escaping their shoot to kill policy."
- The massacre on the Orthodox Maryam Tsion Church in Aksum in which 750 people were killed took place half December. People hiding in the church were brought out and shot in the square in front. The Maryam Tsion Church is a sacred place which holds the Ark of Covenant. A witness with experience in war zones states he "has never seen such a degree of inhumanity."
- Eritrea has consolidated its military presence in the Northern border area from Tekeze, Northern Shire up to Adigrat.
- Western Tigray is divided in two new administrative zones, entirely under Amhara administration. The two new zones are: 1) Telemt (Amharic name of Tselemti), main place: May Tebri (Amharic name of May Tsebri). Part of Northern Gondar. and 2) Humera-Welqayt-Tegede Zone, main place: Humera.
- The administrator of the new Humera-Welqayt-Tegede Zone is Yeabsira Eshete. Colonel Demeke of the Welkait Committee is the deputy and head of security. The new administration is composed of Amhara identifying people.
- Reported that Tigrayan civilians from western Tigray are transported with buses to Central Tigray. The deserted houses in western Tigray are immediately taken over by Amharic settlers who are brought in.
- There have been many reports of rape in Mekelle and elsewhere. A video has also emerged of and ENDF commander admitting that the rape is taking place in Mekelle. The commander says that while it would have been expected during times of conflict, it should not be happening now that the city is well under control of the federal government.

- The number of IDPs in Tigray is at least 2.2 million people, and sources warn that starvation is used as a weapon. Without sanitation, there is serious concern for the health of the IDPs.
- 6 buses filled with soldiers are moving to Shire from Gondar.
- It is confirmed that TPLF spokesman, Sekoture Getachew, and the former director of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority and journalist, Abebe Asgedom, were killed by a drone attack one month ago. They were attacked by a drone while traveling together in a car.

Reported Regional situation (as confirmed per 09 January)

- Ethiopia has announced that it would continue with the planned second filling of the GERD dam in the absence of an agreement. The filling is planned for the coming summer.
- Sudan has expressed “deep concern” about Ethiopian intentions to proceed with the second filling. The minister for water resources said that it had serious consequences for a nearby Sudanese dam, the Roseires dam. The first filling in July 2020 also caused serious problems for Khartoum's water supply.
- The Coalition of Ethiopian Inter-Religious and Elders Council warn that conflict in the Benishangul-Gumuz region is endangering the GERD dam. The dam is located in the region, and violence is aimed at disrupting the construction of the dam.
- The GERD dam negotiations are expected to resume on Sunday, with AU experts present.
- Sudan and Ethiopia have announced that they will hold another round of negotiations regarding the border issue.
- China's biggest port operator, China Merchants Groups, has agreed on a deal that would see Djibouti turned into a regional hub. The agreement would see an investment of 3 billion US\$. CMG already owns a 23.5% stake in the port. China has also built a railway from Djibouti to Addis Ababa.

Reported International dimension (as confirmed per 09 January)

- The British Telegraph has done extensive reporting into the involvement of Eritrean troops in Tigray. They conducted interviews of witnesses to massacres carried out by Eritrean troops in Tigray.
- One Witness said that Eritrean troops killed “dozens” of civilians in Idaga Hamus after capturing it on November 21st. Among the victims was a priest. Another saw summary executions of civilians, also by Eritreans, in Adigrat.
- There were also accounts of indiscriminate artillery firing on Humera, near the Eritrean border. This corroborates stories of other witness reports.
- EU High Representative of Foreign Affairs, Josep Borrell, talked with Deputy PM Mekonnen and conveyed EU alarm over the situation in Tigray. He also said Ethiopia must grant unrestricted access to the region.
- The American-Ethiopian Yohannes Abraham will serve as the American National Security Council Chief of Staff. He is currently the executive-director of President-elect Biden's transition team.
- A new translation tool has been developed to translate Tigrinya into English. Lisan.ai developed this new tool. Translation to Amharic is possible as well.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 52 - 11 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 10 January)

- Fierce fighting reported for the last two or three days on the Tekeze belt of Abi Adi of Tigray Central Zone, between Tigray forces and Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF) and Eritrean forces.
- Intense fighting in the North Western zone of Tigray, Endebaguna area, specifically DebreAbay and Meili area between Tigray forces and ENDF together with Eritrean troops.
- The UN says it has no access to Hitsats and Shimelba refugee camps in Tigray. Access to most parts of North, Western, Eastern and Central Tigray remains constrained as fighting continues in many areas.
- The Federal Ethiopian government has confirmed that Sebhat Nega, 86, the co-founder of the TPLF, was arrested and transported to Addis Ababa together with other TPLF affiliated officials. Sebhat Nega, also referred to as 'Aboy Sebhat' ('father Sebhat') is a retired political intellectual, former director of the Tigray Endowment Fund and director of a think tank, the Foreign Relations Strategic Study Institute in Addis Ababa until 2018.
- During the arrest of Sebhat Nega, a video broadcasted by the Ethiopian News Agency shows two soldiers in Eritrean uniforms, one sitting and one filming the arrest. The participation of Eritrean troops in the Tigray war has been confirmed by General Belay Seyoun of the North Command of ENDF.
- Reported that ENDF reinforcements of several buses loaded with soldiers and heavy trucks were seen in the Afar region and Tekeze areas. Their destinations are not yet known.
- A leaked recording of a zoom meeting shows a high ranking Ethiopian General explaining the plan to take measures on Tigrayan refugees in Sudan. "They are sheltered as refugees; we will keep on bringing them back and we will work on it", says the General. "We will also get inside Sudan and take measures after our mission in the North (Tigray) is completed".
- In the zoom recording the Ethiopian General also talked about the use of armed drones in the war in Tigray. "While the war was happening in front we were attacking/bombing them behind the frontlines with drones and we don't know who is dead and alive", said the General.
- Reported in social media that deputy commander of ENDF 33th division was killed while fighting Tigray regional forces on the Western front.
- Reported in social media that more than 160 civilians have been murdered by ENDF soldiers in Bora near Maychaw town in the Southern Tigray.
- According to a source in social media, 13 members of a family have been killed by Eritrean soldiers in a village named May Cado, near Hawzen, Eastern Tigray.

- The de facto division by the Amhara regional state of Western Tigray into two new administrative zones, entirely under Amhara administration, is carried out without legal procedure or without any official decision. The two zones are called Telemt and Humera-Welqayt-Tegede Zone. Tigrayans living in these areas are transported to Central Tigray and Amhara farmers are settled into the deserted places.
- With regards to control in Telemt or Tselemti in West Tigray, it is reported that Amhara regional forces control May Tsebri, and Tigray regional forces control most of the area to the East.
- On 9 and 10 January shooting was reported in Mekelle during evening and night.
- The UN fears “massive community transmission of COVID-19 in Tigray, increased by massive displacement and the collapse of health services.
- A new UN report said, “only five out of 40 hospitals in Tigray are physically accessible, with another four reachable by mobile networks”. It added; “ Apart from those in (the Tigray capital) Mekele, the remaining hospitals are looted and many reportedly destroyed.” AP reported that “many of the hospitals in Ethiopia’s conflict-hit Tigray region, outside its capital, have been struck by artillery during the two months of fighting”.
- The UNHCR says it has continued to register new refugee arrivals at the Sudanese-Ethiopian border.
- A global demonstration has taken place in different parts of the world, organized by Tigrayan and Eritrean members of the diaspora, demanding the war on Tigray must stop and Eritrean troops must leave Tigray immediately.
- A protest of 'body bags' on St Kilda beach in Australia forms a protest against 'genocide' in the Tigray region. Australian Ethiopians call for action on the crisis in the Tigray region.

Reported Regional situation (as confirmed per 10 January)

- After the withdrawal of UN and African Union peacekeepers from Darfur, Sudan security forces including the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) are tasked to keep the peace and protect Darfur’s citizens. Residents of the Kalma Camp protest against the end of the peacekeeping mission by the UN and AU.
- Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia failed to agree on the way forward for talks on the GERD dam, Egypt’s Foreign Ministry said. The matter is being referred back to the chairman of the African Union.
- Ethiopia blames Sudan for the breakdown of talks to resolve the GERD dam dispute. While Ethiopia and Egypt agreed to another round of talks, Sudan declined because it seeks a role for AU experts in the talks and it is angered by Ethiopia’s intent to fill the dam with or without an agreement.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 53 - 12 January 2021

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Reported war situation (as confirmed per 11 January)

- The former President of Tigray region, Abay Weldu, is arrested by Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF). According to ENDF the arrest was made in a remote valley. Abay Weldu was the President of the Tigray Region from 2010 to 2018.
- It was noted that in the TV images Abay Weldu looked very unwell.
- Tigray acting Deputy President Dr. Abraham Tekeste is also arrested, Abraham Tekeste was the Minister of Finance and Economic Cooperation (MoFEC) of Ethiopia in 2016; he was MoFEC's State Minister for four years, and served as Deputy Commissioner to the National Planning Commission of Ethiopia (2015-2016) and Minister of Urban Development Policy Research and Plan Bureau Head of Ethiopia (2005-2010).
- Names of other arrests include Dr. Redae Berhe, former chief auditor of the Tigray region; Dr. Muleta Yirga, Director of the Tigray Statistics Agency; Mr. Iqubay Berhe, Head of Religious Affairs in Tigray; Mr. Getachew Tefari, Head of Security of the Tigray President Office; Mrs Kiros Hagos, Head of the Bureau of Social Affairs of the regional government of Tigray.
- Those that were arrested had left Mekelle and were in different locations in the rural areas in Central Tigray.
- Many other TPLF affiliated individuals were arrested when ENDF took control of Mekelle on Nov 28. It should be noted that TPLF has more than half a million members in Tigray.
- It is reported that TPLF members have been arrested and taken to Eritrea. This happened especially in Shire town.
- Expert notes that any of the officials in the list of civil arrests could have been arrested at any time without engaging in the war.
- It is reported that the son of Sebhat Nega, Tekeste Sebhat, was killed by a drone attack when he was driving in his car. This happened five or six weeks ago. It was earlier reported that TPLF spokesman, Sekoture Getachew, and the former director of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority and journalist, Abebe Asgedom, were also killed by a drone attack one month ago. They were attacked by a drone while traveling together in a car. (Situation Report 51)
- It is reported that Major General Ibrahim Abduljelil, the head of logistics of TPLF and Brigadier General Gebrekidan Gebremariam have been killed by the ENDF.
- Eritrean soldiers have forced 6.000 refugees from Shimelba camp to return to Eritrea. Of those politically active, 120 have disappeared. Eritrean soldiers also killed 64 people in the camp.
- Report transmitted by people walking on foot to Mekelle, that in December dozen citizens were massacred by Eritrean forces in the church of Medhanie Alein Gu'etelo near Asefe, not far from Adigrat. It happened on the anniversary of the Church Saint.
- Fires have been detected in Asgede, in North West Tigray. Fighting has been reported in the area.

- The convoy heading for Shire has reportedly been ambushed by Tigray regional forces. Casualties are unclear. A high ranking officer might have been part of the convoy.
- An ENDF colonel has been killed by Tigrayan forces during fighting in BoraSolewa near Maychew. Reportedly his forces had been involved in the killings of civilians (reported in Situation Report 52).
- Reports of door to door killings of civilians en masse in BoraSolewa, Tigray, for days. Borasolewa is an area of resistance by the TPLF against the federal government military operation.
- More detail has been released on the massacre at the Maryam Zion Church in Aksum. On Tuesday, 15th of December, Ethiopian federal troops and Amhara militia approached the Maryam Zion Cathedral in Aksum. The church was full, and 1,000 people may have been in the building or the compound surrounding it. A confrontation happened after which people were forced to come out on the square. The troops opened fire and 750 people are reported to have been killed.
- Many residents of Aksum are still staying in rural areas and have not returned yet.
- Gunfire in Mekelle reported in Situation Report 52 was related to the arrest of Sebhat Nega as dozens of federal soldiers were shooting in the air to celebrate over a longer time.

Reported Regional situation (as confirmed per 11 January)

- The GERD dam negotiations have collapsed again. Sudan, Egypt, and Ethiopia have had difficulties in agreeing on a framework for the negotiations. Sudan wants a greater role for AU experts. However both Egypt and Ethiopia have reservations about this. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sudan has said that it will look for alternative methods to resolve the issue, if the talks fail.
- Kenyan forces were hit by an attack by an Improvised Explosive Device (roadside bomb) in Somalia. It killed 4 Kenyan soldiers and wounded 8 more. Reportedly it is the third attack in 48 hours.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 11 January)

- According to Amhara Mass Media agency (AMMA), 300 Ethiopians living in Sudan are returning every day due to tensions between Ethiopia and Sudan. Ethiopians living all over Sudan, are returning with their families and belongings. Returnees interviewed say that they faced harassment and attacks on their properties. It is estimated that 3.500 Ethiopians living in Sudan have returned from Sudan so far.
- The SudanTribune reported that the Ethiopian forces launched an attack into Sudan, killing five women and a child. They clashed with Sudanese forces. An Ethiopian fighter jet carried out attacks in the area.
- An OCHA report on the Benishangul Gumuz region says that the security situation in the region is deteriorating. An increase in violence has been seen since July 2020.
- Humanitarian organisations have moved their staff out of the Benishangul Gumuz region.
- OCHA estimates that the conflict in Benishangul Gumuz has created over a hundred thousand IDPs.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 11 January)

- British House of Lords member, Lord Alton, has called on the British government to investigate the reports of massacres and attacks on refugee camps in Tigray.
- Experts say that the Eritrean presence in Tigray is making the situation worse. Strong antagonism between Tigray and Eritrea, coupled with large scale looting and many reports of massacres, is strengthening Tigrayan resolve to fight to the end. By turning to guerrilla warfare, the TPLF and militias are threatening a war that could take many more months or years.

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Links of interest

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 54 - 13 January 2021

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Reported war situation (as confirmed per 12 January)

- Tigray regional forces have taken Adi Berak and Daero Tekli areas from ENDF and from Eritrean forces. These are strategic locations that connect Adwa with Eritrea via Rama, a town on the border.
- Report of heavy war initiated by the Tigray regional forces on the Ethiopian and Eritrean forces at Semema and Adi-Etay. Semema is about 35 km South of Aksum.
- Footage emerged showing many vehicles of ENDF and Eritrean forces were destroyed by Tigray forces near Wukro in Tigray, following an attack by Tigray forces on an ENDF convoy a week ago.
- Radio Erena is reporting the deployment of additional Eritrean troops to Tigray in Shire, Adwa, Adigrat. Such troops are instructed to remain in the area until the situation in Tigray 'settles down'.
- Eritreans have been called up to report for military duty.
- It is reported that Eritrean wounded military troops are not being able to return home.
- Footage is emerging of Eritrean military involved in training of troops in the ENDF-alliance in Tigray.
- Some leaders and members of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the regional government of Tigray, captured by ENDF and Eritrean troops, would have passed through Eritrea. The captives would have been taken to Eritrea before being handed to Ethiopia.
- It is specifically reported that the location of a picture showing Sebhat Nega, the co-founder of the TPLF, captured by soldiers, is recognised as Mai Edaga location. This is a place in Eritrea, approximately 48 km South of Asmara near the town of Dekemhare. This would point to a modus operandi in which captured TPLF members are abducted/taken to Eritrea and held there (for some time).
- Reported in Mekelle that people who are arrested can not be handed over as basic institutional structures have been destroyed.
- It was revealed by ETV that women were raped in Mekelle in the week following the takeover by the ENDF at the beginning of December; this was reported by an unidentified man in an Ethiopian military uniform who spoke of repeated abuses against women.
- Policemen in Mekelle say that they are not paid by the interim government appointed by Addis Ababa.
- Lists of 49 names of civilians who died in the Saint Mary's Church of Dengelat, Tigray, is circulating.
- Tension is building on the Ethiopia - Sudan border in the Fashqa triangle area. Ethiopia went 5 km into Sudanese claimed territory and five female civilians and a child have been killed by Ethiopian troops; two women are missing, as reported by Sudan. Sudanese troops are building up in the disputed areas.
- The Foreign Ministry of Sudan condemns "in strongest terms Ethiopia's militias aggression" in the Eastern Sudan Al-Fashqa triangle. Ethiopia has accused Sudan of expanding in its territories.
- Sudan called on the international community to condemn the aggression of the Ethiopian militias.

- The Ministry of Information of Sudan reports that there is no progress on the work of the Ethiopia - Sudan Border Commission.
- Ethiopia may take the issue of the GERD-dam to the UN Security Council, if negotiations are stalled.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 12 January)

- MSF teams have been able to enter Tigray, and reports that “tens of thousands of displaced people are living in abandoned buildings and on construction sites in western areas around Shire, Dansha, and Humera towns, while others found refuge in host communities in the east and south of the region.”
- MSF states that “people have very limited access to food, clean water, shelter, and healthcare.”
- MSF teams report “many people are still hiding in the mountains and in rural areas across the region.”
- According to the MSF teams the situation is dire: “power lines are cut, water supplies are not functional, telecommunications networks are down, banks are closed, and many people are afraid to return to their places of origin because of the ongoing insecurity.”
- Food is in very short supply as the war broke out during harvest time and farmers were already coping with the locust infestation.
- Many civilians in Tigray are not yet reached by any food supplies and families face additional burdens as relatives are moving in with them due to the massive displacements in the Tigray region.
- Between three and four million people have no access to basic health care in the Central Tigray alone, the MSF Teams estimate.
- Most of the internally displaced people in Mai Kadra and Humera have left, MSF reports.
- More than 60 civilians were killed in attacks in the Metekel zone in BenishangulGumuz regional state.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 12 January)

- Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa are abducted to Eritrea by Eritrean troops in Ethiopia’s capital.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 12 January)

- Concern raised that Ethiopia and the Horn become increasingly part of the security landscape of the Middle East and that this is a geostrategic concern.
- Expert states that the characterisation of the Tigray crisis as a “domestic law enforcement operation” is undermined by the involvement of Eritrean forces, foreign drone attacks, use of airstrikes, mechanized ground units, and ethnic militias.
- Egyptian investors in Ethiopia will seek international arbitration to protect their investments in the Tigray region and a case will be filed if no agreement will be reached. The compensation on Egyptian investments due to the war in Tigray is estimated at 2 million US\$.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 55 - 14 January 2021

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Reported war situation (as confirmed per 13 January)

- The chief commander of one of the Eritrean divisions fighting in the Eastern front in Tigray has been captured alive by Tigray regional forces.
- ENDF states it has killed three members of the leadership of TPLF who held high office in Ethiopia: Seyoum Mesfin, foreign minister of Ethiopia from 1991 until 2010; Abay Tsehaye, former Federal Affairs Minister and Asmelash Wolde Sellassie, ex-parliamentary chief whip of the Ethiopian Parliament.
- The Ethiopian Government is arresting former retired Tigrayan officials and their spouses. Many of those are said to be arrested from their houses in Mekelle. Official reports make it appear as if they were captured in battle. It is reported that this is not true.
- It is reported from Eritrea that Sebhat Nega, the retired co-founder of TPLF, was arrested in his house in Mekelle, then taken to the Mai Idaga prison near Dekemhare in Eritrea.
- It is understood that Sebhat Nega was not captured in battle and was not captured in hiding, and that such reports are incorrect, but that he was arrested from his home, and brought to Eritrea where he was held until he was handed to the Ethiopian authorities.
- Eritrean refugees in Hitsats camp in Tigray are ordered to return to Eritrea and were forced to walk to Sheraro. From Sheraro buses and trucks take them to Eritrea.
- The ancient Monastery of Debre Damo in Tigray was bombarded by Eritrean soldiers using heavy artillery. Debre Damo, is the name of a flat-topped mountain, or *amba*, and a 6th-century monastery in Tigray, Ethiopia. The mountain is a steeply rising plateau about 1000 by 400 m in dimension.
- The monasteries' church artifacts and materials were looted by Eritrean forces.
- Middle East Eye (MEE) investigates reports of the destruction of the Al-Nejashi Mosque, possibly the oldest Mosque of Africa and casualties first reported on 18 December by EEPA. The attack on the mosque would have occurred on 26th of November. Recently, pictures of the damage emerged.
- According to MEE, a representative of the regional International Association of Muslims in Tigray, Ahmed Siraj, stated several civilians were killed by Eritrean soldiers as they protested the pillaging.
- It is believed that artefacts have been stolen from the Al-Nejashi Mosque, including religious manuscripts, books and letters dating as far back as the seventh century.
- A shrine holding the remains of followers of the Prophet Muhammad in the Mosque is also damaged.
- HRW releases reports that civilians living in western Tigray, especially Humera, were unexpectedly shelled, followed by an invasion of paramilitary troops known as "Liyu Hail" from the Amhara region and ENDF forces, and young members of Amhara youth militia groups "Fano."
- HRW reports that refugees from Humera said that "they witnessed extrajudicial executions by federal forces and their allies during the fighting or after they took over towns."

- HRW found that witnesses said that “some of the victims were suspected TPLF members, fighters, or supporters and retired soldiers. However, businesspeople and farmers were also targeted, as were others whom the soldiers happened to have stopped, including families and children trying to flee.”
- This confirms reports received that “Several large artillery bombardments were allegedly carried out in Humera between November 9-11 2020. Witnesses report that shells were launched from Eritrea, devastating residential areas and destroying a hospital. The Ethiopian army and regional Amhara forces also allegedly then took control of Humera, where they killed civilians and looted buildings.”
- Arte shows refugees speaking about their ordeal when they fled Mai Kadra, on 9 Nov 2020. The town of Mai Kadra had Tigray and Amhara residents (farmers). The civilians speak of horrific killings, roads covered with dead bodies and bodies shoved in mass graves by tractors, with over 600 people killed. The horrific attack was carried out by Amhara, according to the witnesses interviewed by Arte.
- HRW reports that in Mai-Kadra, “a number of refugees reported seeing hundreds of dead bodies which had been shot, stabbed, or hacked with knives, machetes, and axes, including those of ethnic Amharas but also of Tigrayans. Family members from several towns said they saw loved ones killed but could not offer them a proper and dignified burial.”
- HRW finds that “People who remained in their homes or went back to their towns after the heavy fighting had subsided said they saw Amhara “special forces” and Fanos, as well as unidentified gunmen, detain those who remained, and loot abandoned and inhabited homes, shops, and hospitals. People said gold, animals, recently harvested produce, as well as goods from electronics shops were stolen. Many expressed concerns and fears about what they may face if they returned home.”
- Arte speaks to a soldier of Tigray defense forces who fled from Western Tigray as troops were overwhelmed by the mechanized divisions who entered with tanks. According to Human Rights Watch “Some residents described being caught in the crossfire between federal government and allied and TPLF forces in the farmland on the outskirts of towns as they attempted to flee or hide.”
- UN Commissioner for Human Rights, Bachelet, has stated that such killings would be classified as war crimes if “civilians were deliberately killed by a party or parties to the conflict.” She has called for an “immediate, impartial, and thorough investigation into the killings.”

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 13 January)

- The war is causing an economic crisis in Ethiopia. The federal Ethiopian government has not paid salaries in many sub cities of Addis Ababa and southern regional states.
- Opposition leader Yilkal Getnet has requested the deployment of UN peacekeeping troops in Metekel.
- US Senators Chris Murphy, Patrick Leahy and Ben Cardin have sent a letter to Ethiopian PM Abiy Ahmed stating that “over the last few months, the Ethiopian government has increasingly engaged in a pattern of intimidation against journalists” and demanding for the immediate release of the journalists.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 13 January)

- Eritrea has expelled the Ambassador of Egypt, end of December. He travelled to Egypt via an Ethiopian Airlines chartered flight. Eritrea accused the Ambassador of Egypt of working with the TPLF.
- Refugee Council USA expresses its concern over “ the conflict’s mounting humanitarian toll. There have been reports of civilians being targeted and killed, including aid workers, and refugees abducted.”

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 56 - 15 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 14 January)

- Asena TV shows images of four to six explosions outside the municipality offices in the centre of Addis Ababa, which were followed with a few shots.
- New Eritrean troops have entered Mekelle, roaming the city along with many intelligence agents.
- Tigray news reports that Al Shebaab fighters are entering eastern regions of Ethiopia and may even be controlling parts of the Somali region of Ethiopia.
- A video emerged of the massacre at the Aksum Church of Maryam Zion, where at least 750 civilians were allegedly killed by Eritrean troops. The video shows a body taken away by a priest and shows the I.D. cart found on the body. EEPA reported that the massacre took place on 15 Dec., that civilians were hiding in the church and had been ordered out onto the square, before being executed.
- A second video has emerged of the Maryam Zion Church in Aksum, which was filmed on 29th November. The commentator states that the square should have been full on the eve of the annual Maryam Zion celebration, but it is showing an empty square without any people.
- In this video it is explained that the square is empty because Eritrean soldiers had arrived on the 27th Nov. evening in vehicles with an Eritrean military number plate (with red slash). Regional Tigray troops and youth tried to defend the town but could not hold it.
- The video comments that subsequently, the soldiers were shooting anyone they found on the road including those who tried to open shops in the early morning of 28 Nov. ENDF had entered Aksum around the 22nd November, but they did not stop the shooting, and Eritrean soldiers were killing hundreds of people and looting properties.
- The Catholic Bishop of Adigrat (Tigray), Abune Tesfaselassie Medhin, sent an appeal (dated 5 Jan 2021) stating that the people, including Eritrean refugees, have “run out of food items, basic life-saving medicines, water, etc., and have no access to essential services.”
- The Bishop states “millions” of people have been displaced, most of them women and children without food and water to escape from “heavy artillery and air-strikes.” The Bishop calls on humanitarian assistance to respond to the “war-induced” humanitarian crisis in Tigray. Many of the areas have still not been reached by aid organisations.
- In the last days, there has been fighting again around the Hitsats camp for Eritrean refugees. Eritrean soldiers killed many Eritrean refugees and took some of them to Eritrea. Some refugees escaped to the Adi Harush camp. A woman testified that in the flight from Hitsats to Adi Harush, 3 persons died.
- Eritrean refugees in Tigray are taken to Shiraro, others to Badme. There are at least 10.000 refugees, and they are slowly taken to Eritrea. What happens with them in Eritrea, is not known.
- The refugees held in Shiraro and Badme are held by Eritrean soldiers. They have no food, and they are forced to contact their family to send money. However, the refugees are dependent on the Eritrean soldiers to be able to phone relatives.

- The refugees held by Eritrean troops are using mobile phones from the Eritrean soldiers to contact relatives. These are Eritrean mobile phones. The soldiers are making a business out of this, so that they get paid for this 'service'. Soldiers take a part of this money, and in some cases all of it.
- Mulu Nega, the chief of the Interim government in Tigray has cancelled a meeting with Mekelle University staff due to emergency operations in the area today.
- It is reported that banks are the first target to be looted by Eritrean soldiers.
- The US embassy warns against 'strong-armed' robberies of hiking American citizens in Entoto and Yeka parks and Guellele Botanical gardens. The hikers were surrounded by multiple armed men.
- US embassy sets a negative travel advise to (i) Border area with Somalia due to potential for terrorism, kidnapping, and landmines; (ii) Border areas with Kenya, Sudan, South Sudan, and Eritrea due to crime, armed conflict, and civil unrest; (iii) Somali Regional State due to potential for terrorism; (iv) Ethiopia's Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region (SNNPR) due to civil unrest; (v) The East Hararge region and the Guji zone of Oromia State due to armed conflict and civil unrest; (vi) Benishangul Gumuz and the western part of Oromia State due to armed conflict and civil unrest.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 14 January)

- UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Filippo Grandi appeals to the Ethiopian government to give unimpeded access to Tigray "in whatever way possible" and that "all options should be explored" to safely provide desperately needed assistance.
- Grandi stated his teams were distressed by what they saw in Tigray: "Equally distressing to UNHCR teams on the ground has been our inability to assist thousands of Eritrean refugees who continue to flee the camps in search of safety and support. Refugees arriving on foot to Shire town in Tigray are emaciated, begging for aid that is not available. Refugees who reached Addis Ababa are being returned to Tigray, some against their will." (Ep/013/Em)
- The Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (GCRP) releases an atrocity alert delivering a sobering report on the situation in Tigray, Ethiopia, backed up with satellite imagery.
- GCRP Director, Simon Adams, said that, Ethiopia should "guarantee unfettered humanitarian access to all vulnerable populations in Tigray and ensure their full protection."
- Simon Adams called on states with significant ties to Ethiopia to "withhold all military support to the government until independent investigations take place regarding the alleged destruction of refugee camps and other potential war crimes."
- Adams states that "The international community has to increase the political cost of ongoing human rights violations in Tigray."
- Ethiopian Chief of Staff, General Birhanu Jula, received the highest military medal from Djibouti Army Chief of Staff, General Zekaria Shiek, ordered by Djibouti President Ismail Omar Guelleh for his "effective military leadership in the completed law enforcement operation in Tigray and his great contribution to peace and stability in the country and the region as well".
- Alex Dewaal from the World Peace Foundation writes in an obituary of Seyoum Mesfin, Ethiopia's longest-serving foreign minister who was killed in Tigray at the age of 71: "Under Seyoum's guiding hand, Ethiopia became admired as Africa's biggest contributor to peace and security, a reliable contributor of high-quality troops to peacekeeping operations, and a partner in conflict resolution."

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 57 - 16 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. Key in-depth publications [can be accessed on the website](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 15 January)

- During the last three days, there has been heavy fighting in Daero Hafash (East of Axum) where four battalions of Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) and Eritrean Defense Forces (ErDF) were “totally destroyed” by Tigray forces. It is reported that Tigray forces captured “lots of weapons”.
- It is reported that in a place called Dairo Hafash, Tigray forces overtook 4.000 troops of the ENDF/ErDF.
- Fighting is going on in Tsigereda around Wukro between ENDF/ErDF and Tigray forces.
- Reported that one battalion of ENDF/ErDF was “eliminated” by Tigray forces in Ruwa Gered on the way from Adwa to Edaga Arbi two days ago.
- Reported fighting is ongoing in “various locations”.
- Video circulating with shooting and people running in Addis Ababa. No further information.
- In a meeting at Mekelle University staff with the appointed chief of the Tigray provisional government, Mulu Nega, a number of ‘difficult questions’ were raised during a hot debate. Mulu Nega told participants that he had called on the federal government to pull Eritrean troops out of Tigray. However, the country lacked the military power to force the troops to leave Tigray.
- In a nervous response to a question of what would happen to those dissenting, Mulu Nega answered: “if you don't listen to what we're telling you? You'd better go into the deserts and join the fight.”
- A UN team reports that it has encountered uniformed troops from neighbouring Eritrea.
- Message circulated of the relatives of a female Eritrean refugee, Yirgalem Eyasu Hagos, who was kidnapped from the Hitsats refugee camp in Tigray and has disappeared. When she was abducted her children Adyam Kesete, 12, and Merhawi Mebrahtom, 8 were left behind on their own.
- Reported that Hitsats camp was under Eritrean military control from end November/December. Eritrean soldiers killed people, including 2 priests that protested when soldiers tried to enter into the church. Tigray troops started shooting on 17 November in a fight with the Eritrean troops, and 9 Eritrean refugees were killed in the crossfire. Shimelba and Hitsats have not been accessible since.
- Wife and two children of Tsadkan Gebretinsae, former chief of staff of the army, have been detained.
- The Tigray regional government issued a statement today: “The government of Tigray has confirmed that Tegadalay Syoum Mesfin, Abay Tsehaye and Asmelash Weldeselassie were not in the war front due to their ages and health issues. Therefore, they are assassinated by Abiy Ahmed and Eritrean forces, very likely at the order of Isayas.”

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 15 January)

- In a video circulating on social media of PM Abiy addressing a church group, the Ethiopian PM states that his mother predicted that he would be the 7th king of Ethiopia and that he had achieved this.

- Brigadier-General Tesfaye Ayalew, Head of the ENDF Deployment Department, states: “Even if there may be good people amongst them (Tigrayans) we can’t differentiate the good from the bad. To save the country we made it so that they (Tigrayans) were excluded from doing the work.”
- Reported that the chairman of Asimba Democratic Party (ADP) Dori Asegdom is arrested. Earlier, Dori had rejected an invitation from the Prosperity Party to be part of Tigray provisional Administration.

Reported regional situation (as confirmed per 15 January)

- The ambassador of Ethiopia in Khartoum has stated that Sudan took over disputed land as it was taking advantage of the war in the Tigray. Ethiopian military warplane crossed over the disputed border area.
- Sudan has accused Ethiopia of a “dangerous and unjustified escalation”.
- The Sudanese Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) imposed restrictions on air traffic over El-Gadarif province and the greater and lower areas of Al-Fashaga in the east of the country.
- Ambassador of Ethiopia to The UAE, Suleiman Dedefo, points out that the GERD dam is located in the areas of Matema and Benishangul and that Sudan, by implication of its claim to these areas, is claiming the GERD dam. The ambassador states Ethiopia is able to protect its sovereign claim to the area.
- Sudan’s head of the Sudanese military, Lieutenant General Abdel-Fattah al-Burhan, visited the disputed area, meeting Sudanese troops guarding the borders and stated that Ethiopia had started the war when militia killed civilians in the al-Fashaga area.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 15 January)

- EU suspends 88 million€ in budget support to Ethiopia until it opens access to Tigray for humanitarian aid organisations.
- EU Diplomat Josep Borrell states: “We are ready to help, but unless there is access for humanitarian aid operators, the EU cannot disburse the planned budget support to the Ethiopian government.”
- Borrell says it is no longer credible to describe the Tigray conflict as an internal “law and order” operation and that the conflict threatens stability of the whole region. He stated: “We receive consistent reports of ethnic-targeted violence, killings, massive looting, rapes, forceful returns of refugees and possible war crimes.”
- Borrell also pointed to the impact of the Eritrean participation in the war: “there are regional spill-over effects of the conflict, with for instance Eritrean troops being involved in the military operations in Tigray and with Ethiopian troops being withdrawn from Somalia”.
- Referring to the refugee camps in Tigray for Eritrean refugees, Un High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi states: “These are concrete indications of major violations of international law.”
- Reported that Beijing is “extremely angry” at PM Abiy for the killing of Seyoum Mesfin, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia. Seyoum “was respected in policy circles. He was the architect of Ethiopia's strategic partnership with China that spawned a vast infrastructure renewal in Ethiopia.”

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 58 - 17 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa.

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 16 January)

- Fires have been detected on the outskirts of Humera. The fires are within an active combat zone.
- Minutes have leaked of the Tigray Emergency Coordination Centre (TECC) meeting of 8 January 2021. The minutes identify that 4.5 million are in need of food.
- The TECC includes the UN and Humanitarian organisations present in Tigray (MSF, Red Cross, CRS, Norwegian Church Aid) and several administrators of the transitional governments participated in the meeting.
- The minutes identify that five assessment teams have been re-established but only two of them “managed to go to the field”, while three teams have no access and no vehicles to go to West, North-west and Central zones of Tigray.
- Impediments to humanitarian assistance is the lack of vehicles and salary issues as people outside have not received salaries pending payment issues.
- Delivery of water has been difficult as water trucks and missionaries are looted.
- A flow of IDPs is observed “coming into Mekelle and other major towns” showing “how much desperate” people are to get “humanitarian access”. Their produce and household materials are vandalised or burned.
- The humanitarian administrators can not go back to regional offices without food as “people are starving” and they will be in trouble “if they go with empty hands”.
- The Central Zone interim administrator states that “the situation on the ground is dire”. It is explained that “food and non-food items or other livelihoods are either looted or destroyed.”
- The Central Zone administrator warns that “hundreds of thousands” may “starve to death”, if urgent emergency assistance is not dispatched.
- The humanitarian organisations do not have an adequate number of trucks for transportation. During the war all trucks from the region were allegedly looted and driven to Addis Ababa. To transport the required food ratios to 4.5 million people more than 2000 trucks are now urgently required.
- Pictures have emerged on the internet of the bodies of the former Minister of Foreign affairs Seyoum Mesfin, the former minister of Federal affairs Abay Tsehaye, and former chief Whip of the government Asmelash Weldeselassie.
- The pictures of the bodies would indicate that the three have been executed together. The picture of Seyoum Mesfin shows that he was shot in the forehead. Asmelash is wearing socks. There is no indication of any fighting.
- The ENDF had said previously that the retired politicians had been killed in a firefight after they had resisted arrest. Asmelash Weldeselassie was blind.

- The pictures of the retired leaders were posted on facebook by the head of the transitional government in Tigray, Mulu Nega.
- The statement by the provisional administrator of Tigray, Mulu Nega, that Ethiopia did not have the power to get Eritrean troops out of Tigray has led to fierce comments.
- Tsedale Lemma of the Addis Standard states in response to the admission of Mulu Nega: "Any reflection on the status of Ethiopia as a state at this moment should begin by recognizing the somber fact that it's no longer a sovereign state. For a country that fiercely defended its sovereignty for generations, 76 days to lose it is like being hit with a brute force!"
- Increased presence of Eritrean military and intelligence reported in Addis Ababa.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 16 January)

- 20.000 health workers and other government civil servants are not receiving their salary for over two months with some exceptions.
- International partners are requested to fill in the gaps as government structures are not functioning.
- Many businesses in Mekelle remain unable to operate due to a shortage of Ethiopian Birr. A withdrawal limit is still in place, hindering economic transactions.
- The interim administration has said that the majority of businesses are still unable to conduct normal activities.
- The Interim government has also said that government offices have been looted, making public services hard to distribute.
- 24 Former TPLF officials appeared in court, including Sebhat Nega. Federal police have asked for 14 days to investigate the case. The court accepted the extension and adjourned the case until the 29th of January.

Reported regional situation (as confirmed per 16 January)

- Sudan has said that it would not allow Ethiopia to accomplish a fait accompli regarding the filling of the GERD dam. Ethiopia has said that it would proceed with the second filling of the dam in July, something which both Sudan and Egypt oppose.
- Ethiopia has denied that it violated Ethiopian airspace. The chief of the Ethiopian army staff said that Sudan was trying to mislead the Sudanese and Ethiopian people into an "unwanted situation".
- Sudanese Prime minister Hamdok has welcomed the initiative by President Kiir to mediate the Ethiopian-Sudanese dispute.
- Kenya is in talks with China to rearrange its debt. This is important because the harbour of Mombassa serves as a collateral to these debts. This has been an additional factor in heightened tensions in the region.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 16 January)

- France will host the next Sudanese investment conference. Due to take place in Paris in May, the conference aims to encourage investment in the country.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 59 - 18 January 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa.

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 17 January)

- According to Sudan Tribune, the head of the Sudanese Sovereign Council, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, disclosed that Sudanese troops were deployed on the border as per an agreement with the Ethiopian Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed, arranged prior to the beginning of the war.
- Al-Burhan told a gathering about the arrangements that were made in the planning of the military actions: "I visited Ethiopia shortly before the events, and we agreed with the Prime Minister of Ethiopia that the Sudanese armed forces would close the Sudanese borders to prevent border infiltration to and from Sudan by an armed party."
- Al-Burhan stated: "Actually, this is what the (Sudanese) armed forces have done to secure the international borders and have stopped there." His statement suggests that Abiy Ahmed spoke with him about the military plans before launching the military operation in Tigray.
- Ethiopia has called the operation a "domestic law and order" action to respond to domestic provocations, but the planning with neighbours in the region on the actions paint a different picture.
- Al-Burhan described as "inaccurate" statements by Ethiopian officials saying that Sudanese military are implementing the agenda of a third party. "Statements by Ethiopian officials claiming several border areas are a new development that requires to defend the integrity of the Sudanese territory."
- Reported in the Somali Guardian that dozens of Somali soldiers were used as cannon fodder in the recent offensive in Ethiopia's Tigray region and were killed in the conflict. The Somali soldiers were deployed after completing training in Eritrea a few months ago. The Somali government has previously denied involvement in the Tigray war.
- Report received that Amb. Seyoum Mesfin, Asmelash Weldeselassie and Abay Tsehaye were taken from their houses during the war and then brought to Senafe in Eritrea and mistreated there. They have recently been handed to the Ethiopian federal military and were executed without any charge.
- Eritrea is handing out Eritrean national ID-cards to Tigrayans living up to 8kms North of Adigrat. Eritrea is claiming 36 km into Tigray towards Adigrat belongs to Eritrea.
- Reported that 90% of the Central Zone of Tigray now controlled by Tigray regional forces and fighting was also reported in the Southern, Eastern, Western and Southern fronts.
- Tigray regional forces have captured 30 soldiers from EDF in Wajirat in Southern Tigray.
- Fighting was reported at Edaga Arbi and Tigray regional forces have destroyed one ENDF battalion and captured 8 Bren machine guns, 100 AK-47 and many soldiers. In revenge, ENDF forces killed more than 80 youths at Debre Abbay.
- An ENDF allied convoy was reportedly ambushed by Tigray defence forces at Enda Maryam near Hageresalam town in Central Zone Tigray.
- Fires were detected within Enticho town in Central Tigray, a location within an active area of conflict.

- Reported that more than 750 Tigrayan ethnic members of the federal police, who were disarmed during the Tigray war have been deployed and arrived in the Southern Tigray without arms after a short training with the purpose of restoring law and order.
- More Eritrean troops are coming to Adigrat telling citizens to stay closed at home.
- The Sudan defense minister said Ethiopia is massing military forces on the borders in locations facing the Sudanese army deployment.
- Sudan calls on Ethiopia to withdraw its forces from all positions under its control.
- The Washington Post writes that “Though Ethiopia’s prime minister declared victory in late November, its military and allied fighters remain active amid the presence of troops from neighboring Eritrea.”

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 17 January)

- A report by The Washington Post states that starvation haunts Ethiopia’s Tigray region.
- The Washington Post writes that the “first humanitarian workers to arrive after pleading with the Ethiopian government for access describe weakened children dying from diarrhea after drinking from rivers.” The Post reports that “A local official told a Jan. 1 crisis meeting of government and aid workers that hungry people had asked for ‘a single biscuit.’”
- The Washington Post reported that a doctor in Sudan where refugees arrive stated that newer arrivals show signs of starvation. It is also reported that new arrivals come as far as from Aksum and Mekelle to Sudan.
- The Washington Post reports that “More than 4.5 million people, nearly the region’s entire population, need emergency food.” It reports a meeting in which “a Tigray administrator warned that without aid, ‘hundreds of thousands might starve to death’”.
- The Washington Post reports that “In the towns of Adigrat, Adwa and Axum, ‘the level of civilian casualties is extremely high in the places we have been able to access’”
- According to the Famine Early Warning Systems Network “parts of central and eastern Tigray are likely in Emergency Phase 4, a step below famine.” states the Washington Post.
- The AP reports the head of the emergency unit of Doctors without Borders, Mari Carmen Vinales, stating that “There is an extreme urgent need — I don’t know what more words in English to use — to rapidly scale up the humanitarian response because the population is dying every day as we speak.”
- The Telegraph reported that churches and mosques in Tigray are attacked, vandalized and their sacred treasures looted. Further, International experts warned of historical vandalism and “cultural cleansing”.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 17 January)

- The International Tigrayan Muslims Association expressed outrage over the attack on the Al-Nejashi Mosque.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 60 - 19 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa.

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 18 January)

- Reported from Somalia “that 1000 (young) soldiers are missing (presumed dead). Parents are now planning to organize protests.” A report circulating from a Somali MP speaks of 3,000 Somali troops participating in Ethiopia's Tigray war. The troops were sent to Asmara in Eritrea to receive training. According to one report only 180 of them survived. It is reported that one of them contacted his family from Mekelle, saying that he was injured in the war.
- Former head of intelligence in Somalia, Abdisalem Guled, states in the Garowe Online that young men were taken from Mogadishu, Somalia, last year and flown to Asmara, Eritrea, where they received training and these soldiers were used to front the war in Tigray.
- Abdisalem Guled reports that 370 of the Somali soldiers, who were involuntarily conscripted in the front engaging in the war in Tigray, died.
- Video distributed of mothers in Somalia who are in shock to find that youth who disappeared were found in the war in Tigray. Desperate mothers protest in Galkayo Town, Somalia, demanding answers to the whereabouts of their missing children, unknown to them, taken to Eritrea for military training and then deployed and killed in the Tigray War. Some of the children are as young as 14 years. (independently confirmed).
- Federal Ethiopian military movements from Gonder areas towards the Tekeze area. Between yesterday and today around 67 trucks full of military personnel were reported to be passing through.
- Increasing concerns expressed at high political levels in the region that Ethiopia is falling apart and on the brink of a civil war.
- Beginning of confrontation in Kilil, Somalia, this morning in Gabri Dahar, the stronghold of the Ogaden National Liberation Front, ONLF, between the troops of the president of the Kilil and the ONLF, reporting several deaths and injuries on both sides. The president of Kilil has the total support of the Amharas (Ethiopia).
- General Birhanu Jula Gelalcha, the chief of general staff of Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) and the president of Oromia state Shimelis Abdisa held a closed-door meeting with President Farmaajo of Somalia on 15/1.
- Reported that ENDF allied forces were destroyed by Tigray regional forces at Sero, Eastern zone while heading to Adigrat from Adwa via Enticho. 10 orals destroyed; 4 small military cars, one ZU-23, many machine guns were taken and an unknown number of soldiers were captured.
- The Prime Minister of Sudan, Hamdok, says that the lives of 20 million Sudanese is threatened by the GERD Dam as their lives depend on the Blue Nile.
- Sudanese media reports that Ethiopian militias have killed 2 Sudanese shepherds in Gallabat, Gedaref State. A local mayor claims the militias stole around 250 sheep.

- Sudanese media reports Eritrean troops armed with heavy weapons have entered ENDF controlled areas of Wadi al Ghurab and Birkat Noreen inside the disputed Al-Fashaga Triangle. It is said they entered Ethiopia from Humera and crossed into Sudan via Abdurafi.
- Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF) handed over eight soldiers to Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) who were captured during border clashes last December. The handover took place in the border area near Gallabat.
- Reported that an Eritrean gunship helicopter has been shot down by Tigray regional forces at Rama front near Enda Semere area.
- Videos circulating of ENDF troops arrested by Tigray regional forces in Edaga Arbi.
- Pictures circulating of ENDF and Eritrean troops. Eritrean troops are recognisable by the typical Eritrean plastic or rubber sandals, 'congos', or 'shida', desert sand colored uniform or olive colored guerilla styled camouflage uniform, no insignias, no identification as Eritrean. Ethiopian soldiers are wearing boots, country flag, rank and insignias on their uniforms and place for identification and have a different camouflage shading.
- The United Nations and other agencies are rushing to relocate thousands of refugees camped out along the disputed Sudan-Ethiopia border to safer areas further away.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 18 January)

- The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is monitoring the situation in Tigray and carried out two field visits.
- The EHRC found that in Humera 92 people died, including civilians. Residents of Humera report "widespread looting of houses and businesses, by a youth group calling itself "Fano", some members of the Amhara Liyu Hayl (Amhara Special Force) and Amhara Militia, a few members of the Ethiopian Defense Force, and some Eritrean soldiers. Looters have also emptied food and grain storages."
- EHRC concludes that "In all four visited areas of Humera, Dansha, Bissober and Ullaga, residents consistently regret the continued lack of security. People of Tigray ethnic origin residing in Dansha and Humera faced harassment. The fact that justice sector bodies have not resumed their regular operations only adds to residents' sense of insecurity and escalates the risk of human rights abuses."
- The EHRC finds that "It is therefore imperative for the government to restore security in these areas and take the necessary measures to ensure the protection of the community."
- The EHRC concludes that "The crimes allegedly committed by some members of security forces in the areas included in this report need to be investigated and perpetrators held to account."

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 18 January)

- Africa Minister say UK Government is "gravely concerned over allegations of atrocities and violations" in Tigray but it's "the UK's longstanding position that determining whether a situation amounts to genocide is an issue for competent national and international courts, not governments"

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 61 - 20 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 19 January)

- Reported that 9.2% or about 65,000 children under five years of age in Tigray are suffering from acute nutritional deficiency such as wasting.
- Reported that 5 families have been found dead of starvation in Erop, Eastern part of Tigray.
- A video and pictures have emerged showing the extent of the damage Eritrea and Ethiopian forces caused to Cherkos Church in Zalanbesa, Tigray. The church was carved during the 5th century. It appears bombed and looted and one side is completely destroyed.
- More pictures coming out from Wukro, 40 km from Mekelle showing buildings, hotels, shops, banks and cars heavily destroyed, allegedly by Eritrean and ENDF allied forces.
- Osman Abukar Dubbe, Minister of Information from Somalia, denies reports that Somali soldiers took part in the conflict in Ethiopia's northern Tigray region. He states reports that hundreds of Somali soldiers were killed in the conflict is untrue.
- Other sources continue to stand by the story that Somali youth are fighting in Tigray. The reported number of soldiers that would have been sent to Tigray varies.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 19 January)

- The Electoral Board of Ethiopia states that it canceled the license of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). Elections are due on 5 June. The TPLF held an election in Tigray on 9 Sept which the TPLF won.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 19 January)

- The European Union is sending the Finnish foreign minister Pekka Haavisto to negotiate with the Ethiopian government to open up a full access humanitarian corridor in Tigray. Pekka Haavisto intends to report back to the EU Council.
- The top priority of the EU is full humanitarian access: "International humanitarian law is not about giving access to government-controlled areas (..) International humanitarian law means giving access to all areas where people need us, and it's very clear that this is not the case with the current agreement. We have told the Ethiopians that we stand ready to negotiate something different, but what is now on the table is not working."
- UNHCR led the first humanitarian mission to the refugee camps Mai Aini and Adi Harush in Tigray and found thousands of Eritrean refugees in "desperate need" of supplies and services. Ethiopia granted UNHCR a one-time access to conduct a needs assessment, in the two camps. UNHCR did not receive authorisation to enter two other camps, believed to be under intense strain.

- A second EU official stated that the approach by the UN, based on the idea that some access was better than no access at all, had failed, and stated: "The government is still claiming that things are getting better, at least where they have control. It's not true. It doesn't work."
- A spokesperson for the European Commission's development department said Ethiopia will have to comply with the following conditions before the EU will disburse future budget support: "Granting full humanitarian access for relief actors to reach people in need in all affected areas, in line with International Humanitarian Law. Civilians must be able to seek refuge in neighboring countries. Ethnically targeted measures and hate speech must stop. Mechanisms to monitor human rights violations must be put in place to investigate allegations of breach of Human Rights. Communication lines and media access to Tigray should be fully re-established."
- Reported that both the Ethiopian prime minister's spokeswoman Billene Seyoum and Tigray's interim Governor Mulu Nega are yet to respond to emailed queries seeking insight on the matter of humanitarian assistance reaching Tigray, Al Jazeera states.
- Mehari Taddele Maru, a professor at the European University Institute, alleged the refusal to allow unhindered access to the region was meant to keep news of starvation and abuses by state forces under the wraps. (AJ)
- Mehari Taddele Maru states that the "Deliberate obstruction of humanitarian access is a classic method of systematic starvation of people (...) Ethiopian government and Eritrean troops continue to obstruct access to humanitarian aid. The blanket continues and thus first-hand information is almost impossible to get. The restriction of information is in itself a crime of the state to hide other crimes."
- Murithi Mutiga, Horn of Africa project director for the International Crisis Group comments on the looming famine: "In past conflicts, mass starvation in parts of Tigray has stiffened local resistance and led to prolonged conflict" (AJ)
- Murithi Mutiga states that "If the government is to be taken at its word that its campaign is aimed only at ousting the TPLF and not at harming the Tigrayan people, they should swiftly accede to the demands of humanitarian agencies for access to Tigray and even to areas TPLF forces may still control to avoid a humanitarian catastrophe."
- Daniel Bekele, Ethiopia's human rights commissioner, said greater access to media, human rights groups, and international organisations should be allowed and that civilian-military coordination was needed to smooth out hurdles in humanitarian access. (6/1, online briefing by the Geneva Press Club)
- The Sudanese government has launched an appeal to the international community to provide urgent aid and to increase support and contributions to help Ethiopian refugees who fled to eastern Sudan as a result of the fight in the Tigray region.
- Responding to the alleged attack on people at the Maryam Zion Church in Aksum, Michael Gervers, professor of history, University of Toronto, states: "The government and the Eritreans want to wipe out the Tigrayan culture. (...) The looting is about destroying and removing the cultural presence of Tigray."
- Canada expresses concern of the humanitarian situation in Tigray, the situation of refugees and the "continued barriers to humanitarian access". The Government of Canada states that the "protection of civilians must be upheld in accordance with international law & humanitarian principles".
- Diaspora kids from Tigray publish "[A New Song](#)" to stop the war in Tigray.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 62 - 21 January 2021

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Reported war situation (as confirmed per 20 January)

- Journalist Dawit Kebede, who was working at Tigray TV and reported the fighterjet downed in Tembien by Tigray forces, has been killed. He was arrested earlier in Mekelle, subsequently released, but after three days killed together with the lawyer Bereket Berhe, in Adi Haws, in front of the UNICEF building on 19/1.
- An American witness, who was in Aksum during the war, reports that in Aksum water and electricity went out on November 2, prior to the start of hostilities on November 3 and 4. As a result people in Aksum did not see any news. A few days later people arrived from Humera. They told that they came because of the war, that their houses were destroyed, and people had been killed.
- The witness states that a few days later shooting started when Eritrean soldiers entered Aksum with tanks. They came in thousands and killed whoever stood in their way. There were dead bodies all over the city: "I had to step over dead bodies to get there. The entire city from the bus station to the park was covered in bodies." Many civilians were killed when St. Michael church was shelled.
- The witness states that the Eritrean soldiers said they had been told to kill, to kill all Tigrayan males over the age of four. The soldiers said they were told to kill all males so that they would not come to take revenge in the future.
- According to the witness soldiers fired indiscriminately at anyone. They killed people without warning. People were not given any warning. The soldiers just fired on everything.
- The witness states that Eritrean troops killed soldiers, priests, farmers, and burned crops. The Eritrean troops forced farmers and priests to slaughter their own animals and they killed the farmers if they refused to do so.
- The Eritrean soldiers stole medicine from health facilities and destroyed the infrastructure. They broke glass windows and stole everything.
- The witness states that she heard of old women and young girls being raped.
- According to the witness, people of Aksum sought refuge in the Mariam Zion Church.
- The witness states Eritrean soldiers were completely in charge of the situation in Aksum and that ENDF soldiers watched and did nothing to stop the violence and the killing. The ENDF soldiers were fired at if they tried to stop Eritrean soldiers who were looting.
- Refugees from Shemelba and Hitsats refugee camps report that there is nothing left of the two refugee camps after they have been looted and destroyed. Refugees have relocated to the two camps Adi Harush and May Ayni, or have traveled to Addis Ababa or other places where they feel more safe.
- The refugees report that the camps were first attacked by Eritrean soldiers who tried to take those who were wanted by the Eritrean government for political reasons and were sent back to Eritrea. Afterwards Tigrayan regional forces chased the Eritrean soldiers out.

- The refugees report that several refugees were killed and that refugees had been terrified. They had not had any food rations for 2-3 months. "We ate what we could find, even plants and leaves".
- The refugees did not have difficulty passing through checkpoints on their way to Addis Ababa. But they had to pay much more than normal bus fare prices for the trip: 200 Birr from Shemelba to Shire, 1000 Birr from Shire to Mekelle, and 1500 Birr from Mekelle to Addis - per person.
- The Somali Federal Republic Federal Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation asks President Farmaajo to clarify the whereabouts of thousands of Somali soldiers trained in Eritrea. Ref 02/79/21, dated 18/01/2021.
- The Somali Parliament urges President Farmaajo to send a team to Asmara to confirm if the Somali soldiers are alive or dead. The report indicates that more than 2,800 of Somali soldiers were killed in the Tigray war.
- In a village in the Alitena region controlled by Eritreans, six men are killed. None of the six were armed or politically active. Alitena is a territory that the Eritrea Ethiopia Commission decided belongs to Ethiopia, therefore to Tigray regional state. Serious food shortages are reported in this region.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 20 January)

- Action Against Hunger's (AAH) Ethiopia director Panos Navrozidis states: "Central Tigray is a black hole" as aid groups only have access to certain towns and many of the people are remaining within rural villages because of fear of fighting. They can not access food or health services.
- Tigray Water Resource Management Bureau stated that access to clean water in Tigray is jeopardized for many due to "damaged infrastructure, looted offices, stolen equipment and an inoperative dam."
- Nebeyu Sihul Michael, Head of Tigray's Prosperity Party sends out a letter from the Prosperity Party (PP) to new PP-members and former members of the TPLF on recruiting all ex-TPLF members to be PP members and to do all necessary surveillance regarding any kind of communication with TPLF. In case there are any cadres that look suspicious to the party, 'all necessary measures' must be taken against them as stated in a letter dated Nov 14, 2013. TPLF members are forced to become member of the PP.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 20 January)

- Mr. Dina Mufti, of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, denies allegations that Eritrean and Somali soldiers are among forces fighting in Tigray as baseless, speaking to the media today (20/11).
- Ethiopia disaster commission spokesman, Debebe Zewdie states that there is no starvation in Ethiopia.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 20 January)

- The nominee US Secretary of State Antony Blinken expresses concerns about the atrocities in Tigray and the fate of Eritrean refugees in Tigray senate confirmation hearing, on a question of Sen Coons.
- Nominee Blinken states the US needs to take an active approach, that access to the Tigray region is needed, provision of humanitarian assistance, accountability, restoration of communications, and an effort to put a dialogue in place to deal with the conflict and litigate it, and expressing concerns that the situation may destabilize the Horn of Africa.
- Blinken expresses the desire for active diplomatic engagement of the US in the conflict in Tigray.
- Lord Alton asks the UK government what steps are taken to ensure that eye witness statements are taken from refugees from Tigray about reports of war crimes and crimes against humanity; how any such evidence is preserved; and what plans there are to put judicial justice in place.

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Links of interest

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ethiopia-conflict/ethiopians-dying-hungry-and-fearful-in-war-hit-tigray-agencies-idUSKBN29POX1>

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 63 - 22 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 21 January)

- The Economist states that “Ethiopia’s government appears to be wielding hunger as a weapon” as the Tigray region is “being starved into submission”, citing reports of “horrifying accounts of ethnic killings, mass rapes—and starvation.”
- This is a human made tragedy, with purposeful ‘red tape’ created by the Ethiopian Ministry of Peace, according to the UN, stating that “Plenty of food is available. Charities and UN agencies have been trying to get supplies through for months. But Ethiopia’s Orwellian Ministry of Peace has sent them on a paperchase for permits.”
- UN Humanitarian Chief, Mark Lowcock, states: “For more than two months there has been essentially no access to Tigray. (...) There are 450 tonnes of supplies we’ve been trying to get in that are stuck.”
- Lowcock states that when the federal government is on rare occasions granting permission “for an aid lorry to pass” it is obstructed on the way: “it is typically stopped en route by regional governments, which insist that they, too, need to give permission, or halted by troops inside Tigray.”
- The Economist calls for donors to tie any support to full humanitarian access: “Others, such as America and Britain, should add financial pressure. Ethiopia is desperately short of foreign currency, and depends on loans and grants from the IMF and World Bank. Until its government allows food into Tigray, donors should not give it another dollar.” In other words: no aid until civilians are allowed to eat.
- United Nations Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict and Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, Pramilla Patten said, “I am greatly concerned by serious allegations of sexual violence in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, including a high number of alleged rapes in the capital, Mekelle”.
- Pramilla Patten states that: “There are also disturbing reports of individuals allegedly forced to rape members of their own family, under threats of imminent violence. Some women have also reportedly been forced by military elements to have sex in exchange for basic commodities, while medical centres have indicated an increase in the demand for emergency contraception and testing for sexually transmitted infections. In addition, there are increasing reports of sexual violence against women and girls in a number of refugee camps.”
- Pramilla Patten calls on all parties involved in the hostilities in the Tigray region “to commit to a zero-tolerance policy for crimes of sexual violence, in line with their respective obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law.”
- It is reported that two Generals of Tigray, Major General Mohammed Esha and Brigadier General Mulugeta Berhe, regional forces have surrendered to the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF).
- An Ethiopian spokesperson reports that the two generals were members of the TPLF Central command and coordinated actions against the northern ENDF command post in Nov 2020. However, this is denied by a source who states that: “This is exaggeration. The major commanders are not these.”

adding that the generals had retired “a long time ago” and were “not involved in leading operations” as they had “serious health problems.”

- Confirmation that journalist Dawit Kebede Araya was killed by Ethiopian government Security Forces. The journalist was working at Tigray TV. He was killed together with the lawyer Bereket Berhe in the area Adi Hawsa: “Both were shot in their head and their bodies were found in a car they were driving.” at 8 pm EAT (19/1).
- Correction: A witness states that Eritrean troops killed *Tigray* soldiers, priests, farmers, and burned crops. The Eritrean troops forced farmers and priests to slaughter their own animals and they killed the farmers if they refused to do so.

Reported situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 21 January)

- Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) has reported that Aksum University graduating students will be enrolled at Mekelle University, Kwiha Campus to complete their studies.
- Previous reports indicate that Aksum University was destroyed and looted by Eritrean and Ethiopian forces. There is a report of a male lecturer killed under cruel circumstances in a report by a witness, stating the killing was carried out by Eritrean soldiers. A witness who screamed was also killed in a sadistic act of violence, according to a witness report.
- Water supply in Tigray has been affected as the Gereb Geba clean water dam has stopped operating and workers have left work because of the conflict. The situation is aggravated by the looting of all the offices, money taken from safes, and vehicles, drilling machines and generators taken away.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 21 January)

- Mr. Dina Mufti, spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, denies allegations that Eritrean and Somali soldiers are among forces fighting in Tigray, speaking to the media today (20/11). The statement came after the head of the Sovereign Council in Sudan, Al-Burhan, stated that Ethiopia and Sudan had discussed tactical issues prior to the war began in Tigray. Other reports also indicated that tactical preparations were made with Eritrea and with Somalia prior to the beginning of hostilities.
- Mr Dina Mufti rejected an offer by South Sudan to mediate between Ethiopia and Sudan.
- Concern that the conflict in Ethiopia’s Tigray region may negatively affect foreign investors in the Ethiopian garment industry, an upcoming market.
- Several settlements in Benishangul Gumuz’s Metekel zone have caught on fire since January 1, 2021, with a high likelihood of these being attacks, as part of the ongoing conflict in this part of Ethiopia.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 21 January)

- UK Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab, is visiting East Africa to urge Prime Minister Abiy to express the need for unrestricted humanitarian access to provide assistance to the Tigray region.
- Raab, during a visit to Sudan, has also said that the British government would back Sudanese economic reform with 50 million US dollars. Some of the aid would be direct handouts to Sudanese families.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 64 - 23 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 22 January)

- Today 800 additional Eritrean soldiers arrived in Mekelle today.
- Reported that 80-100 young people were killed by Eritrean and Ethiopian forces in the Endabaguna area in the North Western Zone. The area where the victims were killed has been and still is under the control of Eritrean and Ethiopian forces.
- Report that Chinese Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV), drones, were used in the war in Tigray, by the UAE deployed in Eritrea.
- The article reads (in translation): "According to a report by TASS on December 3, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) deployed UAVs in Eritrea recently and had a big success."
- Youuav states: "Under the continuous bombing of drones the Tigray People's Army kept retreating. And there was no way to deal with it. The rebels couldn't support it and began to surrender. On December 1, the Ethiopian government states that senior officials of the Tigray People's Army had surrendered to the Ethiopia army. The official who surrendered was Kriya Ibrahim."
- The report states that "In the civil war in Ethiopia, the pterosaur drones undertook a 24-hour non-stop bombing mission and destroyed the rebels alive."
- The article explains that the deployment of the UAV's made a critical difference to Ethiopia winning the war: "Although the Ethiopian army is equipped with advanced weapons including AR-2 rockets, the battle remained a stalemate because the advantages of those weapons were not fully utilized. But when the pterosaur drones joined, the situation changed quickly. Death was hovering above the heads of the rebels for 24 hours (...). The drones made the rebels feel powerless, and the destruction in this period was terrible."
- The article confirms earlier reports published in the Situation Report EEPA. On 17 November the Spokesperson for the Tigray government, Getachew Reda, claimed that the UAE was involved in attacks in Tigray through drones sent from Assab port in Eritrea.
- Africa Intelligence published earlier that: "Rebel forces in Tigray province claim that they have been bombed by Emirati combat drones, while Addis Ababa has been releasing images of its own drones, which are observation devices made by China's Zerotech."
- On 18 Nov Tigray President Debretsion wrote a letter to alert that "non-African actors" had provided UAVs to Eritrean and Ethiopian forces, while sources on the ground reported that UAE UAVs were carrying out attacks on Mekelle, Shire and Aksum. On 20/12 it was reported that Bellingcat confirmed the presence of "Chinese-produced drones" at the UAE's military base in Assab, Eritrea.
- Further drone attacks were reported on in Workeamba in which 85 people died (4/12 2020); Abi Addi where civilians were attacked indiscriminately (8/12); Central fronts in Tigray (13/12 2020); in Wukro and Tembien where hundreds of civilians died among others with bombardments carried out with drones ((15/12 2020); two journalists were killed by a drone attack reported 10/1 2021 and on 21/1 2021 it is reported that the son of Sebhat Nega is killed by a drone attack, driving in his car.

- A General of the Ethiopian army stated in a leaked zoom meeting video about the use of armed drones in the war in Tigray. "While the war was happening in front we were attacking/bombing them behind the frontlines with drones and we don't know who is dead and alive", said the general.
- Youuav explains that "the cost of a Chinese-made Pterosaur drone is only about US\$1 million".
- It is reported that Eritrean troops in Tigray are enforcing Eritrean citizenship on the Tigray Irob community, which is a minority group. Reportedly, Eritrean forces are appointing their own administration, have the Eritrean flag installed in parts of Irob, and occupy local government facilities.
- Report that "Escapees from Irob arrived in Mekelle last week, reported an ongoing heavy fighting all over Irobland. Widespread indiscriminate civilian mass killings and burning of houses by Eritrean forces are reported from Giitello, Gammadaa, Alitena, Awo, Harrade, Sabaya, Magauma, Mosigade, Dawhan, Kimbiro, Agaralekoma, Maibinno, Maadia villages in Irob district. Just in the last two weeks at least 50 civilians are killed in those villages including 10 family members from Gammadaa village."
- It is reported that "about 21 to 30 civilians at church in Giitello village where they were gathered to celebrate Ethiopian Christmas at local church" were killed by Eritrean forces.
- AP/Washington Post report that pressure is growing on Somalia's government amid allegations that Somali soldiers have been sent to fight in neighboring Ethiopia's deadly Tigray conflict.
- The AP/Washington Post quotes a mother who says: "I heard that our children who were sent to Eritrea for military training have been taken and their responsibility was turned over to (Ethiopian Prime Minister) Abiy Ahmed to fight for him," and "According to the information I gathered, our children were taken straight to Mekele city," the capital of the Tigray region, she said. "You may understand how I feel, I am a mother who carried her child for nine months in my belly, that's my blood and flesh."

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 22 January)

- Poland expresses deep concern regarding the massacre in front of the Church of Our Lady Mary of Zion in Aksum in the Tigray region: "We strongly condemn the perpetrators of this barbaric crime committed in a place of worship. We expect the Ethiopian authorities to immediately take all possible measures to clarify its circumstances and punish the perpetrators."
- Poland calls "on the parties to the conflict to refrain from violence and respect human rights, to ensure the safety of the civilian population, and to properly protect the places of worship and freedom of religion. We appeal for unimpeded access for humanitarian deliveries to the Tigray province."
- Pramilla Patten, UN Special Rapporteur on Sexual Violence in Conflict, states that there are increasing reports of sexual violence against women and girls in a number of refugee camps. She expresses concern about the "more than 5,000 Eritrean refugees in and around the area of Shire living in dire conditions, many of them reportedly sleeping in an open field with no water or food."
- Norway states it is "deeply concerned by reports of the use of SGBV in Tigray. Norway joins UN Special Rapporteur Pramilla Patten in calling on all parties to commit to a zero-tolerance policy for SGBV. Obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law must be respected."

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 65 - 24 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 23 January)

- It is reported that Eritrean soldiers, controlling many districts in Irob land, Tigray, kill many Tigrayan young men: "We hear Eritrean soldiers told the local elders and parents that, they have orders to kill all male youth older than 15."
- It is reported that "there is no telephone, no aid, no electricity, no freedom to movement even locally, no access to any external organization of any kind whatsoever in the border areas with Eritrea. Eritrean forces also denied access to the interim government in Tigray and the Ethiopian army staff to go past Adigrat town." In Adigrat telephone lines were restored on 20/21 January.
- ATV Asena received credible reports that Eritrean troops brutally killed more than 50 civilians in the areas of Irob and Alitena. For example, in an area named Gamda four members of a family (with an age between 18-25) were murdered. Besides, people are also dying from starvation and there is no communication, electricity, water supply and banks services.
- The Irob of Ethiopia and the Saho of Eritrea are Saho speakers. It is also the case that the Saho in Eritrea face marginalisation starting from the fact that the Eritrean Government refuses to admit the existence of any indigenous people in Eritrea (i.e Kunama, Nara, Saho etc..). In fact in Eritrea in the Saho areas the Eritrean Government has appropriated land. This is a physical appropriation through enclosure over and above the Eritrean 1994 Land Proclamation.
- A delegation of the Catholic church is reaching out to the Catholic Bishop in Adigrat, with a delegation, following a letter of the Cardinal on the dire situation. It is reported that the Catholic Cathedral church of Adigrat in Tigray has been damaged and was looted by Eritrean forces.
- The Catholic delegation reported that a "church compound in the diocese was used as a military command center, even when the parish priests and the Daughters of St. Ann were staying there. The priests and the nuns witnessed heavy fighting." A nearby Orthodox church, mosque and other church buildings sustained damage.
- A List is published with 29 people (25 names) identified as victims of a massacre on the 5th of January 2021 inside Medhane-Alem church in the districts of Gulomakeda, Zalanbessa. The list includes 5 priests and 4 deacons. The church is located in a village called GueTelo. The brutal massacres are allegedly perpetrated by Eritrean soldiers.
- Hundreds of Somali parents whose sons were sent to Eritrea for military training and sent to fight in Tigray secretly, have been camping in the streets of Mogadishu for the last two days. They demand the government to provide information on where they are. Some of the Somali parents of Somali youths reportedly killed in the Tigray conflict met with Ahmed Moalim Fiqi, Security Minister in Galkayo. They want to know whether their children are dead or alive.
- Eritrean forces guard Mekelle airport, in the capital of Tigray, as security. There is a curfew imposed in Mekelle at night from 18.00 hours.

- People in Tigray are dying from starvation, stated Abraha Desta, Prosperity Party's appointed head of Tigray bureau of social and labour affairs: "While waiting for a comprehensive report, until now 10 in Gulomeked Woreda and 3 children in Adwa have been reported dead from starvation."
- Somali officials and the Uganda People's Defense Forces (UPDF) under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) claimed that 189 al-Shabaab fighters are killed in an operation in southern Somalia by Ugandan soldiers, using attack helicopter gunships. Two mounted weapons and motorbikes were also destroyed in separate fire strikes.
- There has been fire detected on 22/1 near Dansha town, Western Tigray region, where there is still active conflict.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 23 January)

- Reports of forces backed by Somali regional government attacked Ethiopian federal Police at Mille district, Adaytu Kebelle, Afar region. During the attack, several federal police members were killed and severely wounded.
- The Ethiopian parliament adopts the State of Emergency to the Metekel zone of Benishangul Gumuz region.
- Sudanese State Media (SUNA) quoted Indian Al-Jaili, an official in charge of the Refugee Commission in the Blue Nile State, stating that more than 400 Ethiopian refugees have crossed to the Sudanese borders and reached the Blue Nile State and settled in Yabger, Gezira, Minza, and Al Dim areas. Refugees are displaced due to recent conflict in Benishangul Gumuz, Metekel zone.
- The Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO) issues a press release urging the Federal Government and the interim Regional Administration "to devise emergency routes and special mechanisms to provide emergency humanitarian assistance in areas where there is a security threat and to facilitate the provision of services in all areas."

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 23 January)

- The Louisville's Ethiopian community in the US calls for President Biden to add pressure to help end the conflict in Tigray.
- Concern raised that the war in Tigray was pre-planned: "Outlines of a plan were revealed when information was leaked about a meeting held by President Isaias just prior to the outbreak of the war." Eritrean President Isaias "brought together his closest confidantes on the eve of the Tigray war. He said that Eritrea had to accept that it had a small economy and a lengthy Red Sea coast that it cannot patrol on its own. He suggested forming some sort of 'union' with Ethiopia, at least in terms of economic co-operation and maritime security."
- An article on the use of Chinese drones in the war in Tigray from the UAE base in Eritrea, Assab, states: "The UAE supports Ethiopia and dispatched drones to fight the rebels. After the Ethiopian army has seen the power of the pterosaur drone, it is estimated that it will have the idea of buying it. After all, it can have the ability to attack the ground without spending a lot of money (...). UAVs are very attractive to Ethiopia." There is concern that the regional expansion of the war in the Horn is leading to increasing supplies of arms and to regional arms trade including, through mercenaries, and that this will escalate the regional conflict.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 65 - 24 January 2021

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Reported war situation (as confirmed per 24 January)

- Al Arabiya reported that Ethiopia has bombed the Abu Tayyur area, and the Sudanese army has responded. The Sudanese army has not announced any deaths due to the bombing of Ethiopia. Other news outlets state that the Sudan airforce has responded with air attacks in Ethiopia.
- Sudanese media report that authorities in Sudan prevented Ethiopia's Ambassador to Sudan, Yibeltal Aemro, from leaving the country via land. The ambassador eventually took a flight back to Ethiopia.
- The Office of the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Abiy Ahmed, issues a statement asking "members of the public to be vigilant about fake news circulating" about the PM on social media. The statement comes after PM Abiy has not been seen in public since December 23rd and many theories are circulating on social media on the condition of the PM, including that the PM was flown to a hospital abroad. Others say he was seen this week with his military commanders, but not in the media.
- Among increasing speculation of the situation of PM Abiy, far right Amhara party high officials have started posting in social media: 'now is the time'. There is increasing concern over the political stability and questions raised why PM Abiy is not appearing in public.
- Social media also report that the Interim President of the Tigray region, Mula Nega, handed in a resignation letter, with as reason "the plight of the people of Tigray who are starving to death and sexually harassed by foreign forces" and that the the administration had no say in any matter; the resignation would have been submitted to the Office of the PM, and Nega is waiting for a response.
- Report that 48 priests were killed, allegedly by Eritrean forces, in a massacre at the orthodox church of Adi Fetaw village near Gerihu Sernay Town, Tigray, not far from the Eritrean border.
- Eritrean forces killed 24 priests in a massacre in the Edaga Arbi area, Central Zone, Tigray, today 24/11.
- Detailed report of looting in Yeha: "Eritrean soldiers went from house to house. They looted many objects, even clothes. Other objects were broken so that they cannot be used any more. They group-raped an 8th month pregnant lady. They continued the looting in surrounding villages, up to the monastery of Abune Mezraete in the hills above, where some of the church equipment was stolen. The Eritrean soldiers are either very young, below 18, or old, between 60 and 70 years."
- The report about Yeha also identified: "The checkpoints by Eritrean soldiers in that area are strict. There are many. They want to avoid that young men move and get trained."
- It is reported that in May Hanse city close to Hitsats, near Shire, Tigray, an Eritrean Colonel gathered local residents and said Eritrea will rule them as of that time. He said, if they accept this, they can live there, if not, they have to leave the place.
- Eritrea is claiming territory deep into Tigray. Eritrean troops have put their flags in Sheraro.
- It is reported that the Amhara members of the national Orthodox leadership had proposed that the Ark of the Covenant from Aksum would be taken to Tana (Bahir Dar) for temporary protection. This caused the bloodshed in Aksum at the Maryam Zion Church. People in Aksum did not accept the

proposal but thought it was a pretext to steal the Ark of the Covenant, regarded as 'a robbery of heritage'. The people were prepared to defend the Ark with their life.

- Detailed direct report of an entire family having been killed in Aksum. Previous reports indicated that massacres had taken place in Aksum, allegedly carried out by Eritrean soldiers.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 24 January)

- Ethiopian government will be setting up local militias in the Metekel Zone of the Benishangul-Gumuz region to combat the recent increase of violent intercommunal attacks. "Locals will be trained and armed to defend themselves" said Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Demeke Mokenen, during his visit to IDPs from the Metekel Zone.
- An official, who holds a high position in the Ethiopian Foreign Ministry and asked for anonymity, told Anadolu Agency that "Egypt has intensified its destabilization efforts against Ethiopia and the volatile Horn of Africa region."
- TPLF-leader Sebhat Nega stated during his court appearance in Addis Ababa (15/1): "I don't want to speak Amharic because I can't. Until I got arrested I never thought about Tigray but Ethiopia. You took us to the mountains from our houses without a single changing cloth, none of us has been captured from the mountains". This confirms reports that the elderly leaders were arrested in their houses. He appeared in court together with Keriya Ibrahim, former Speaker of the House of Federation of Ethiopia.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 24 January)

- Killings in Tigray of former Ethiopian Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin and two other former senior political figures are reason for concern, as they were elderly and in poor health, says former Prime Minister of New Zealand, Helen Clark, pointing to demands of a high-level international investigation.
- The World Health Organization is putting out a warning that the conflict in Tigray may lead to the spreading of deadly diseases, as health services have been disrupted. The WHO reports that the incidence of COVID-19 in the Tigray region is higher than the average for the country.
- Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization says he was honoured to speak with VP Kamala Harris on the commitment of the Biden administration to the WHO.
- Questions raised as to whether the 2018 Peace Agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea was a precursor to the war establishing an alliance of Ethiopia and Eritrea and the United Arab Emirates, providing the Emirates with a military base in Assab, Eritrea. The alliance is accused of a strategy of a "scorched earth war and deliberate mass starvation in what is a genocide in the making."

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 67 - 26 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 25 January)

- Fighting between Eritrean forces and Ethiopian National Defence Forces has started around Kwiha, near Mekelle.
- There was conflict among ENDF and Eritrean troops in Adigrat on 24/1. According to sources, Eritrean troops wanted to transport Ethiopian tanks to Eritrea but ENDF soldiers resisted. Later they start shooting at each other and dozens of ENDF and Eritrean troops have been killed and wounded.
- Fighting was also reported among ENDF allied and Tigray regional forces in Endabaguna and May Tsebri surroundings.
- Abraha Desta, the head of the interim Tigray administration Bureau of Social Affairs, has reported that his office has received reports of the death of 13 people, of which three are children, due to starvation. Ten of those came from Gulomahda Woreda and three from Adwa.
- Reported by a medical worker in Adigrat that he "treated six women who had been raped by a group of soldiers and told not to seek help afterwards." Reported that in Mekelle, "one man was beaten up after begging soldiers to stop raping a 19-year-old, according to a medical worker who treated both victims." Reuters reports that "Mekelle charity Elshadai said it has prepared 50 beds for rape victims."
- The administration has also published its new numbers of people in need in Tigray. They estimate that 4.5 million people are in need of emergency food assistance, and 2.5 million, up from 2.2 at the beginning of January, are internally displaced.
- The collapse of the government structure has made it difficult to deliver aid. High risk is preventing aid agencies and the regional administration from effectively transporting supplies to areas that need it.
- Aid workers report sadistic violence used against civilians, including rape: a young woman separated from relatives was given a choice to be killed or to be raped. Reuters reports that aid workers report multiple of such stories perpetrated allegedly by militia fighters from Ethiopia's Amhara region and Eritrean soldiers, both allied with Abiy's troops. There have been many such reports of soldiers forcing themselves on civilians or demanding sex in exchange for basic supplies.
- Eritrean refugees are high at risk. According to Reuters, medical centers in the area are under high pressure for emergency contraception and tests for sexually-transmitted diseases.
- The AP/Washington post has published new accounts of Eritrean looting and killing in Tigray: the road was full of trucks "filled with boxes addressed to places in Eritrea." The witness also reported that Eritrean soldiers would go house to house and kill men and boys as young as 7. They would subsequently not allow burials.
- AP/Washington Post report another witness who fled into the mountains, running away from nearby fighting. When she returned 12 days later, she stumbled over 70 bodies of people she knew. The same witness reports that a boy was recruited by soldiers to do errands, and subsequently killed. The witnesses blame the majority of the atrocities on Eritrean soldiers.

- AP/Washington Post report that thousands of Eritrean soldiers allied to the Ethiopian forces are involved in Tigray: "They are accused of targeting thousands of vulnerable refugees from their own country, raping and intimidating locals."
- AP/Washington Post express concern that Eritrean soldiers may not be leaving Tigray.
- Many Eritrean Refugees from Hitsats fled or were told to go to Shiraro, from where they were allegedly transported to Eritrea. Hitsats and Shimelba camps are reportedly deserted.
- Reported that Eritrean soldiers have also been attending meetings with humanitarian workers. Both the Eritrean and Ethiopian governments deny their presence.
- According to the Ethiopian Human Rights commission (EHRC) they found 90 Tigrayan jailed for almost three months on suspicion of being supporting TPLF, during visits to prisons in the Gambella region of Ethiopia. No police investigations has started.

Reported regional situation (as confirmed per 25 January)

- Al-Arabiya reported that the Sudanese Minister of Culture and Information, Faisal Saleh expressed his concern over the second filling of Ethiopia's GERD. "The dam can't be brought into operation until the three countries reach a binding agreement", he says. This is a legally confirmed document that will allow three parties to regulate the water level in the bed of the Blue Nile River.
- Sudanese officials report that their soldiers came under Ethiopian ENDF mortar fire on Sunday while patrolling the border.
- Kenya and Ethiopian troops are fighting for control of BeledXaawo town of Somalia. Ethiopia is assisting militia loyal to President Farmaajo while Kenya is supporting other militia for Abdirashid Janan, Jubaland minister of security.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 25 January)

- The EU is making preparation to send Finland's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Pekka Haavisto, as a European envoy to deal with the crisis in Ethiopia. The Foreign ministers of EU member states met today to discuss the EU approach.
- New Ambassador Geeta Pasi, USA Ambassador to Ethiopia, was nominated by Trump and President Biden has approved her, with a comprehensive strategy to the Horn: <https://youtu.be/FoOpeCs3J2A>
- The outgoing US ambassador to Ethiopia, Michael Raynor, has called for an independent investigation into the situation in Tigray. He said that "we continue to be troubled by the activities of Eritrean actors in the region". and called for "an immediate halt to, and independent investigation of, all credible reports of atrocities, sexual violence, and human rights abuses in Tigray...."
- The British government has answered a question of Lord Alton in the House of lords. They say that they "are shocked and saddened by further reports from Tigray of massacres of civilians, sexual violence, and attacks on Humanitarian facilities and places of worship." The British government continues to call for independent, international, investigations into incidents in Tigray, as well as free and unfettered humanitarian access.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 68 - 27 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 26 January)

- Eritrean Brigadier General Abraha Kassa, the Director of National Security for Eritrea, was in Addis Ababa today. *Unconfirmed* Information is reported of a new policy from Eritrea. All educated and “elite” Tigrayans should be ‘forced to flee’ or ‘squashed’ to remove all leadership from the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF).
- Demands in Ethiopia are growing that Ethiopia should defend its territorial sovereignty. However, this position is undermined by increasing numbers of Eritrean troops entering Tigray or consolidating their positions.
- Yesterday a new trend was reported of clashes between the Eritrean and Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF), who are allies in the fight against the TPLF. The fighting between Eritrean forces and Ethiopian National Defence Forces has continued today in Kwiha, a suburb of Mekelle town.
- Reported that 2 helicopters and six planes landed in Mekelle. Security at Mekelle airport is controlled by Eritrean troops. Reports of heavy gunshots around the city.
- It is reported that the ENDF has sent reinforcements to Mekelle.
- Telephone and telecom has been completely switched off again all over Tigray this afternoon.
- A video circulating on social media shows Eritrean troops in Wukro town with vehicles commonly seen in the Eritrean Defence Forces (EDF). Also donkeys are carrying equipment.
- Reported that Eritrean troops who have amassed gold and wealth from looting in Tigray, are not planning to return to Eritrea, which is well known for its harsh conditions of indefinite national service and forced labour, extreme poverty, and lack of freedom.
- While the administration in Addis Abeba is providing strong pressure regarding what should and should not be said in public, the interim administration increasingly admits the catastrophic situation on the ground in public and asks for support, risking disagreement with the capital.
- Reported that an Eritrean gunship helicopter was shot down by Tigray regional forces at Hamedo, near Rama town at the border with Eritrea.
- Regina Lynch, Aid to the Church in Need (ACN), reports on the massacre in Maryam Zion church in Aksum: “those who have been able to visit the area are reporting the possible murder of 750 people in an assault on the Orthodox Church of St Mary of Zion in Aksum last November.” She states that “ACN has received confirmation of a series of killings and attacks on innocent people in many parts of Tigray, including in the Aksum area, and she said the population is terrified.”

Reported regional situation (as confirmed per 26 January)

- Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson, Dina Mufti, states that: “Ethiopia will only have negotiations with neighboring Sudan after its forces withdraw from Ethiopia’s territory”.

- Egypt Foreign Minister, Sameh Shoukry, states that “Egypt will not allow any attempt to impose the policy of fait accompli and will not allow any party to control the Nile River”, in remarks to the Egyptian Parliament today. This is as reports circulate that Ethiopia is starting to fill the GERD dam.
- The foreign minister said Egypt attaches great importance to the issue of the GERD in order to maintain its water rights: “Egypt took part in a series of talks out of its belief in the importance of reaching a binding legal agreement on filling and operating the dam.”

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 26 January)

- Kenya’s former electoral commissioner, Roselyn Akombe, is taking up the key post at UNDP in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia as the UN Development Programme as the governance and peace building coordinator.
- EU Council meets and High Representative, Joseph Borell, reports that the EU Foreign Ministers agreed on the urgent need to prevent further destabilisation in the Horn. Foreign Ministers were briefed on the situation in Tigray, and the Sudanese-Ethiopian border. The Foreign Ministers agreed that there will be more political pressure in order to settle the dispute through diplomatic and peaceful means.
- The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Finland, Pekka Haavisto, will travel as an EU Envoy in order to visit the region in early February, together with Amb. Alexander Rondos, the EU Special Representative.
- The DG of UNESCO, Audrey Azoulay, calls for an inquiry into the killing of journalist Dawit Kebede. She condemned the killing and calls on the authorities to investigate this crime and bring its perpetrators to justice. The journalist was killed in Mekelle on 19 January.
- The EU Parliament joint meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee and Development Committee discusses the situation in Ethiopia and Tigray. The Ambassador of Ethiopia to the EU, Hirut Zemene, states that the humanitarian work to reach 2.5 people is on the way. The main problem is insufficient trucks, but, according to the Ambassador the food is in Tigray and the bottleneck is only a distribution problem.
- It is recalled that in December EEPA reported that all available trucks from Tigray, and trucks from Tigray in Djibouti port, were dispossessed and taken to Addis Ababa.
- Four retired US ambassadors to Ethiopia wrote an open letter to the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Abiy, stating their concerns about recent political developments in the country.
- The letter states “We have watched the conflict in Tigray with grave unease as, according to the United Nations, nearly 60,000 refugees have fled to Sudan, 2.2 million people have been displaced, and 4.5 million people need emergency assistance, many of whom are without adequate food. We are also worried about the reported presence of Eritrean troops in Tigray, which could jeopardize Ethiopia’s territorial integrity”.
- “We are concerned about the worsening ethnic tensions throughout the country, reflected in the proliferation of hate speech and rising ethnic and religious violence. This growing violence seems to us to be contrary to Ethiopia’s long-standing tradition of tolerance for diverse religions and ethnicities”, the ambassadors added.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 69 - 28 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 27 January)

- Arbi Harnet (a group of underground sources in Eritrea) warns that preparations are being made and already “near completion” for a “renewed final offensive” in Tigray.
- The offensive is being finalised and implementers are being informed that this will be “the final offensive to annihilate TPLF”, orchestrated as what is called a “final offensive”, the group states.
- Report that large numbers of Ethiopian uniforms arrived in Mekelle yesterday and that Eritrean soldiers were changing uniforms during the telecom shut-down. More Eritrean soldiers arrived in Mekelle.
- There is concern that Eritrean soldiers may be instructed to fight in Ethiopian uniforms in some places. Eritrean troops were dressed in ENDF uniforms in the Hawzen and Nebelet battles and they were captured by Tigray regional forces wearing these uniforms.
- At the airport in Mekelle, Eritrean troops, carrying out the security, are dressed in ENDF uniforms.
- The news comes as other sources report that Brigadier General Abraha Kassa, Director of National Security of Eritrea, was in Addis Ababa on 25/1. There was a disagreement among Eritrean and Ethiopian higher officials during the meeting at the 4 Killo Palace, the office and residence of the PM. Various sources reported altercations, with some reporting gunshots and a report of people having been shot, possibly even killed; the exact number of casualties is unknown due to variance in reports.
- Information from the Eritrean Embassy in Addis Ababa was leaked, according to a source, instructing a strategy to ensure a policy against “all educated and elite Tigreans” to be ‘forced to flee’ or ‘be squashed’ ‘mercilessly’ (as reported yesterday).
- This strategy builds on the Eritrean government’s interest in the list of arrest warrants of Tigray leadership. Eritrean official government news-site Tesfanews published a list of arrest warrants that - according to the news site, had been issued by the Ethiopian federal policy Commission. The list was published on Nov 13 and includes the names of 64 persons. The same list was published by Fana.
- The following persons named in this list of arrest warrants have now been killed: Asmelash Weldesilassie (TPLF executive member); Daniel Assefa (Head of Tigray Bureau of Finance and Planning) and ; Seyoum Mesfin (former Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia); Abay Tsehaye (former Director of Policy Study and Research Center Institute); Zeray Asgedom (former Director General of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority) ; and Sekoture Getachaw (former official).
- The following persons named in this list have been arrested: Dr Abraham Tekeste (Vice president of Tigray Regional State); Keria Ibrahim (former Speaker of House of Federation of Ethiopia); Dr Engineer Solomon Kidane (former Head of Addis Ababa City Road and Transport Bureau); Dr Addisalem Balema (Director General of Policy Research Institute); Mulu Gebregziabher (former state Minister of Transport); and TPLF co-founder, Sebhat Nega.
- Bank accounts of the persons on the arrest warrant list have been frozen.

- The Eritrean underground group Arbi Harnet states that “Eritrean soldiers have been trying to escape the war to seek refuge in Sudan or in different directions once they reached Tigray”.
- According to the group many Eritrean soldiers and particularly women soldiers from the 17th and 61 brigades are now stationed in Humera” to stop Eritrean soldiers from fleeing to Sudan.
- The intervention of Eritrean and ENDF allied forces lacks a military command structure, other than the high-level personal relationships between PM Abbiy and President Esayas. The military culture between the armed forces is different. While the ENDF is trained as a professional outfit, Eritrean Defence Force (EDF) is based on a conscript army, trained to survive on the land that has been captured, rather than rely on supplies and support.
- An ENDF colonel was killed by Tigray regional forces on 25/1 in Adwa.
- Six vehicles carrying soldiers were destroyed by Tigray regional forces in the Hamedo area, along the way from Adwa to Rama. The vehicles were allegedly going to Eritrea carrying looted properties.
- A new list is available of the victims of the attack on the Medhanie Alem church in Gu’etelo in wereda Gulomakeda (reported earlier). The list was compiled by local inhabitants and published in social media. On the celebration day of Medhanie Alem Eritrean soldiers killed 32 persons, among whom one could not be identified, and nine priests and church servants, one child and other villagers, mostly in Gu’etelo and some in nearby villages Ara’ero, Fredashim, Agamyu and Sebeya.
- More than 20 civilians have been killed by Eritrean troops in the Edaga Arbi area, Central zone, Tigray.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 27 January)

- The United States has made clear its position that all Eritrean troops need to leave Tigray immediately citing "Credible reports" had emerged of their involvement in human rights abuses, assaults in refugee camp, sexual violence and looting. The statement says there is “evidence of Eritrean soldiers forcibly returning Eritrean refugees from Tigray to Eritrea.”
- According to the statement “Eritrea appeared to have launched artillery attacks from its side of the border, and had troops in Tigray, though the exact number was unclear.”
- The State department states dialogue between the Ethiopian government and Tigrayans was "essential", and humanitarian aid needed to be mobilised immediately because of "credible reports" that hundreds of thousands of people may starve to death.
- The Biden administration has imposed a temporary freeze on U.S. arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates as it reviews billions of dollars in weapons transactions approved by former President Donald Trump, according to U.S. officials.
- Mr. Biden “has made clear that we will end our support for the military campaign led by Saudi Arabia in Yemen, and I think we will work on that in very short order,” Secretary of State Antony Blinken said at his confirmation hearing last week. Washington will continue to help defend the Saudis against Houthi attacks, Mr. Blinken said.
- The review, the officials said, includes the sale of precision-guided munitions to Riyadh as well as top-line F-35 fighters to Abu Dhabi, a deal that Washington approved as part of the Abraham Accords, in which the United Arab Emirates established diplomatic relations with Israel.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 70 - 29 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 28 January)

- Asmara is mobilising 200.000 fresh troops, assigned to travel from Eritrea to Tigray to fight, through both the Zalambesa & Rama border, for a “final offensive”. This ‘huge’ number “has been achieved by enlisting several categories of conscripts who might have previously been exempt. This includes women with very young children, retired soldiers and some children as young as 16.”
- It is reported that “the Eritrea plan is to finish off the Tigrayan resistance before international pressure forces the Ethiopian government to give access to Tigray for aid and reporters.”
- The Morning Star reports that a letter signed by a Prosperity Party representative, was leaked to them showing that Ethiopian government forces threatened to kill TPLF members if they refused to join the ruling Prosperity Party. Similar threats were made to journalist Dawit Kebede, just before he was shot.
- Human Rights Concern Eritrea (HRCE) received eye witness accounts of the killing of unarmed civilian refugees at the Eritrean refugee camp in Shimelba, Tigray. In Nov, two senior Eritrean military officers entered the camp and told refugees to return to Eritrea. The refugees refused, fearing for their lives.
- HRCE reports that subsequently eight Tigrayan civilians, suspected of supporting the TPLF, were brought into the camp and that they were executed in front of the refugees, to terrorise them. Four Eritrean refugees, from the Kunama tribe, were also killed by the Eritrean forces.
- As refugees were terrified by the executions, they were removed at gunpoint from the camp and marched to Sheraro, where they were loaded onto trucks and repatriated to Eritrea, states HRCE.
- HRCE reports that on the 23rd Nov armed militia started to shoot at refugees in the Hitsats Eritrean refugee camp in Tigray. Ten refugees died immediately; more than forty were wounded.
- On 5th Jan, Eritrean military forces ordered all refugees in the Hitsats camp to march on foot to Sheraro; pregnant women, children, elderly. There they were loaded on trucks and taken to Eritrea, states HRCE. The information was obtained from refugees who could escape and contacted HRCE.
- Shimelba and Hitsats camps are deserted and there have been fires, confirmed by satellite images.
- Eritrean troops allegedly killed more than 10 civilians in Idagahamus today.
- According to sources, Tigray forces killed more than 2000 ENDF allied forces at May Keyih area.
- Heavy fighting reported around Wukro and also in Tsigereda.
- A fourth video appears of civilians speaking about the atrocities and killing of civilians in Aksum on Nov 28-30th. In the video, some Eritrean soldiers deny the killing of civilians. One Eritrean soldier states that they were in Aksum and other towns and killed those suspected to be enemies.
- EriTV announced the death of senior Eritrean officer Colonel Girmay Gebreyesus.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 28 January)

- The Stop Slavery in Eritrea Campaign issues a statement against forced conscription in Eritrea, demanding protection of Eritrean refugees in Tigray; demands that Eritrea suspends forced conscripts and suspends all war activity, withdraws Eritrean troops from foreign territory; and asks all Eritrean conscripts to “defy orders to attack innocent civilians.”

- Stop Slavery states that the UN Security Council must reinstate sanctions on President Isaias Afwerki and PFDJ officials, stating: "This is Isaias' war, the same Isaias Afwerki found guilty of crimes against humanity, using forced conscripts under the indefinite national slavery program to wage war on Tigray and commit horrendous crimes - gross human rights violations to which Eritreans have been subjected to for decades - and now he is also allegedly unleashing on civilians in Tigray with impunity."
- Stop Slavery states: "that many of the forced Eritrean conscripts are underaged girls and boys."
- Stop Slavery demands an independent investigation in war crimes committed and that Eritrean and Ethiopian forces found guilty of war crimes to be taken to the International Criminal Court.
- Stop Slavery expresses deep concern "about reports of Eritrean refugees forcibly returned to Eritrea by the brutal regime they fled from." The campaign urges UNHCR "to protect Eritrean refugees."
- Stop Slavery states that it is inspired by Somali mothers demanding the return of their children, secretly recruited for the war in Tigray: "We are inspired by the courageous Somali mothers demanding the return of their children that have joined the war in Tigray."
- Reuters has reported that Eritrea has secretly been recruiting Somali men and sending them to fight in Tigray. According to people interviewed, young men were recruited by the Somali Federal Government to work in Qatar, but instead were sent to Eritrea to serve in the military against their will.
- The young men were not told. One called home in November and said: "We were all shocked to land in Eritrea." and "I have not seen food save a lump or slice of bread since I left Somalia in 2019."
- Human Rights Concern Eritrea (HRCE) states that Eritrean military forces "consists mostly of young conscripts who have been forced to fight in Tigray against their will."
- HRCE states that the UN Commission of Inquiry into Human Rights in Eritrea found "evidence of Crimes against Humanity" being committed in Eritrea and that Crimes against Humanity have been committed in Tigray. HRCE calls on the International Criminal Court to investigate these crimes immediately.
- Protests by Somali mothers asking where their children are, in Mogadishu, Guriel, and Galkayo.
- Somalia has admitted that it sent young recruits for training to Eritrea, according to Garowe online.
- The United States demanded that Eritrea leave Tigray immediately. The US calls for an independent and transparent investigation into the abuses in the region. The US Senate Foreign Affairs committee discussed the conflict in the Horn and Sudan.
- In Washington protest held demanding Eritrea leaves Tigray by Tigray and Eritrean protesters.
- In a new statement, UNICEF has said that 10% of the children below five are showing signs of severe malnutrition. This is above the WHO 3% emergency threshold.
- The Washington Post published an opinion asking whether PM Abiy is committing war crimes. The Post points to the many atrocities committed by Eritrean troops in the region. No action has been taken by the Abiy government despite many reports coming out of the region of massacres, rapes and looting.
- The Washington Post states that PM Abiy has been accused of blocking food deliveries to the region, even as soldiers were burning crops and stealing cattle. International officials have warned that millions are at risk of starvation; the Tigray interim government stated that people had died of famine.
- U.N. officials say about 80 aid workers are waiting in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, for permission to travel to Tigray.
- Joint NGO Letter calls for a Special Session on the deteriorating human rights situation in Ethiopia.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 71 - 30 January 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 29 January)

- A source from Mekelle, Tigray, speaks of the difficulty of speaking about what is happening: "Our problem is that the value of life has become meaningless. When a single person dies, we feel all the pain. For some, it has become a matter of statistics. But here, we don't know how to mourn and how to speak to a family where they have lost eight relatives."
- The source describes a very depressing situation in the town due to the complete information shut-down. He has realised that "information is as important as food and water." He states: "we don't know who is creating information and it adds to demoralisation and intimidation".
- The source lives near the Mekelle Ayder referral hospital. He says: "I could see the pain in the eyes of the ENDF soldiers who used Ayder hospital as a camp. Most of them are 18-19 years old. They have no hope. They know they may die soon. It is devastating for all the families of these young people."
- The source explains that the Ethiopian federal troops were in Ayder hospital in the first week after ENDF had captured Mekelle: "I went and saw around 500 ENDF soldiers with machine guns. I thought they came to protect us. But when Eritrean soldiers came they did nothing to protect the property."
- The source states: "Eritrean soldiers came with vehicles to take goods. The soldiers were few. The source says that the elders asked the ENDF colonel at the hospital campus whether they would prohibit the looting and that they would follow orders from ENDF. The ENDF colonel said they had no mandate to tell Eritrean soldiers what to do. The elders then asked ENDF to give weapons to defend the hospital which is a public property of the Ethiopian government."
- The source states ENDF could not help to protect the institution from the Ethiopian government. The information that the Eritrean soldiers were on their way to Ayder referral hospital went around very fast through the megaphone system. The elders instructed the community to block the road. "My house is ten minutes away from there and everything was blocked." He concludes: "the community protected Ayder hospital from major looting. They did the same for the Telecom (TV and satellites)."
- "When I grew up, my mother never smiled", says the source. "Now I have had the revelation to understand why. The experiences of war have made her afraid. A lot of pain may have taught her sadness. Now I have a young boy of three. I find that he can differentiate between a gunshot and a bomb and airstrike. We are passing this experience of war through the generations."
- The source from Mekelle states: "The pain we must see is the bigger picture of all our Eritrean and Ethiopian brothers. The problem is a collective one of the whole region."
- Eritrean I.D. cards have been distributed to citizens in Irob, Tigray, Ethiopia, confirms a source by phone from Sebe'a in Irob. He confirms that everything has been stolen. People only wear the clothes they wear. Many people have fled to the mountains and are hiding in caves. There is no food, no money. Two grandchildren of the source have been killed.
- Another source says that the Eritrean troops are looting blankets of farmers in rural areas around Tigray. When they do this they say: "you have taken us 20 years back in development. In return, we

will take you (Tigrayans) 50 yrs back. You will know in the future that you will never be richer than Eritrea.” The source was in a village near Rama. He left for Addis and spoke by phone from there.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 29 January)

- A group of “Concerned Eritreans Regarding the Civil War in Ethiopia”, signed by Professor Emeritus Bereket Habte Selassie, issues a statement. Dr. Selassie has held high-profile positions within Ethiopia, serving as Attorney General, Associate Justice of Ethiopia’s Supreme Court, Vice Minister of Interior, and Mayor of Harar. He was the Chairman of the Constitutional Commission in Eritrea after its independence in 1993 and the principal author of Eritrea’s constitution, which never came into effect.
- The group of Concerned Eritreans express their “grief over the Ethiopian civil war that on Nov. 4th started” and condemns “in the strongest possible terms the wanton killings, displacement, famine and distress that the Ethiopian Federal Government and its partners have since inflicted upon the civilian population of Tigray.” The Group states that “The Eritrean military is actively involved in the war on orders of President Isaias Afwerki and his close circle.”
- The Group expresses its duty “as citizens and as human beings to take a firm stand against role of the Eritrean military in subjecting the people of Tigray and Eritrean refugees in Tigray to conditions that led to killings, pillaging, sexual violence, destruction of heritage sites displacement.”
- The Groups strongly condemns “President Isaias Afwerki and his close circle for coercing Eritreans into causing death and destruction for the sole purpose of exacting personal vengeance.”
- The Group notes: President Isaias aims “to sow generational feud and hatred between Eritreans and their Tigrayan neighbors. We can only overcome such seeds of hatred with love, compassion and remorse, and hence we express our respect for and solidarity with the people of Tigray.”
- The Group states that “Soldiers of the Eritrean Defense Forces (irrespective of their ethnic roots) who have been designated to waste in this debacle are themselves victims of the repressive regime, and their commanders and the regime in Asmara bear primary responsibility for the violations that they endure and that they inflict. The United States has said that it has communicated directly to senior Eritrean officials that Eritrean soldiers must withdraw immediately from Tigray.”
- The Group strongly condemns “the hypocrisy of enforcing the strictest lockdown since April 2020 while sending citizens to battle. While most governments are working hard to combat the spread of COVID-19, President Isaias Afwerki has created a conducive environment for large-scale deaths by exposing Eritrean soldiers to mass-spread of the virus and battlefield deaths.”
- The Group calls “for the immediate and unconditional withdrawals of the Eritrean military from Tigray and Ethiopian forces from Eritrean territories. We urge the world community and international and regional organizations to pressure the Ethiopian federal government and President Isaias and his associates to end the war.”
- The Group calls “upon the international community to pressure the Ethiopian federal government to grant humanitarian access to Tigrayans and Eritrean refugees in the region, who are in dire need due to war-caused hunger and shortage of other basic necessities.”
- The Group calls upon the United Nations, U.N. Security Council, the African Union, the European Union, President Joe Biden’s administration and other partner countries to appoint an impartial body to investigate and bring the perpetrators to justice. The atrocities that are being committed in Tigray amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity and violate many international treaties and conventions that Eritrea and Ethiopia have signed.”
- The US has ‘directly’ pressured Eritrea to withdraw forces from Tigray.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 72 - 31 January 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 30 January)

- Fresh reports from the battlefields in Tigray state that second campaign has started with fighting reported in Daero Hafash, Semema, Mahbere Dego, Feresemay, Nebelet, Hawzen, and Edaga Arbi.
- Reported "that Eritrean presence in the second campaign is very high." The report reads: "The Eritrean troops are present at all the fronts. They use the following tricks: using the Ethiopian flag; changing uniforms to ENDF; sometimes hiding troops in some areas, etc."
- Except for Hawzen in Eastern zone, fighting is concentrated in the Central Zone of Tigray.
- Report that Eritrea brought 13 trucks of troops via Edagahamus (Eastern Tigray zone) towards Hawzen and Nebelet areas.
- Sources indicated that Eritrean forces and Ethiopian National Defence Forces mobilized 163 military transport cars ('orals') of soldiers via Maytsebri to Endabaguna and then into Central Tigray.
- Video from Shire showing 8 big trucks passing by, loaded with Eritrean troops, posted on 29 January.
- Reported that 20 young people were killed by the allied forces in areas between Adidaero and Adi Kokeb in the North Western part of Tigray.
- A list of names of civilian people killed in Irob dated 28/01, put together by the Irob Advocacy Association, shows 52 names; 50 men and 2 women. The list is "not exhaustive". According to the association all 52 civilians were "killed in their homes and backyards, during the late December 2020 to early January 2021" campaign. The association states that they "did not take part in combat mission." The civilians were "peasant farmers" and included teenagers.
- The 52 civilians killed in Irob all fall under the administration of Irobland, from the villages of Gammaa Daa/Alitena, Maagauma, Awo, Aggarale, Waratle, Kafna, Addaga-Abbe, Addaga-Dululuho, Addaga-Sassaleri, Massata-Kimbiri, Assagarwa-Ado Dagga, Garabino, Assagarwa and Maytsiaa.
- Report that Eritrean refugees from Hitsats were forcibly sent back to Eritrea by Eritrean forces and these have "settled around Badme area." The report states that the refugees have been "without enough access of food, water and shelter" for "more than 45 days." Among the refugees are young people, mothers and children, the report states.
- A source reports that the price of 100 kg teff is now 8000 Ethiopian Birr, equivalent to €167.00.
- In an interview with Alex de Waal, Mulugeta Gebrehiwot, advisor to the TPLF and Senior Fellow of the World Peace Foundation, states that Seyoum Mesfin, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Asmelash Woldeselassie, former Ethiopian parliament chief whip and Abay Tsehay, Ethiopia's former minister of Federal Affairs were killed: "They were staying in a village, and they didn't have an army. They were just in a secluded area. They (...) killed them. It was the EPLF that killed them." The EPLF is a reference to the Eritrean troops of Eritrean President Isaias.
- A source reports on the sadness of losing Seyoum Mesfin killed in this way: "I am not a member of any political party. We know Seyoum and it is not just about power. I sat with him, shared his life experience." He adds: "He is our symbol of freedom and perseverance. He is a true leader and hero for

many. He has sacrificed his whole lifetime for his people. People are in shock. His death is so painful for all of us.”

- In the interview, Mulugeta Gebrehiwot expresses himself clearly on the expectation that the Eritrean forces will remain in Tigray.
- Mulugeta Gebrehiwot states: “They had a meeting last week, it is some information we got from them, among the senior commanders of the army. There was a request from some of the army commanders on how long they are going to stay in Tigray. The response they gave them was, ‘Once we leave Tigray, PP [Prosperity Party] will not stay for one week in Tigray, and therefore we will leave Tigray to Weyane [TPLF] again and it will revive. And therefore, we have to remain there up until PP can pick it up which might take several months to come back.’ That is the answer that they gave them.”
- TMH reports that according to sources from Adigrat, Eritrean troops dismantled a radar which was installed in Adigrat following the Ethio-Eritrean war (1998-2000) and is transported to Eritrea.
- It is reported that soldiers kill those who saw a crime - including rape, or tried to help; this was news that came with people who travelled from Adwa and Aksum to Mekelle.
- A source reports a meeting with a doctor from Aksum who stated that on the day of the Aksum massacre he himself listed 300 bodies. The reflection is that even more than 750 people might have been killed. The community had understood that the Eritrean soldiers were intending to remove the Ark of the Covenant and the community came to protect it, including women and young people. The source states: “This was a massacre.”
- Report that soldiers take revenge on civilians. In some places the soldiers intimidate the people: “For every battle lost they kill five civilians.” In Mekelle there have been many fights. Everytime during the battles in Mekelle and nearby districts they lost, they had been intimidating the doctors and civilian patients. The soldiers intimidate by announcing that they will kill more people in revenge.”
- Reported from a source in Mekelle that young women working in the eating places, cafeterias, restaurants and bars are vulnerable to abuse, due to the curfew at 18:00 a.m., leaving the places open only for the soldiers. The girls have no one to protect them.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 30 January)

- Qatar demands an investigation regarding the Somali men who had been offered jobs as security men in Qatar but were tricked and sent for training to Eritrea, from where they were sent to fight alongside Eritrean troops in the war in Tigray, Ethiopia.
- France says in a statement that it is “extremely concerned by the gravity of the humanitarian and food crisis in Tigray and reiterates its call to the Ethiopian government to facilitate access to the region – including the Hitsats and Shimebba refugee camps – by the UN and humanitarian organizations.”
- The statement from France reads that “Repeated and consistent allegations of serious human rights violations in the Tigray region cannot be ignored. France urges the Ethiopian authorities to facilitate independent investigations and to take the legal actions they had announced.”
- The French statement applauds the UN action and welcomes the EU efforts.
- Medecins sans Frontières reports that “around 80 or 90 percent of the health centers that we visited between Mekele and Axum were not functional”. The centers had no staff and had suffered robberies.

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<https://www.doctorswithouthorders.org/what-we-do/news-stories/story/ethiopia-violence-tigray-causes-untold-suffering>

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 73 - 01 February 2021

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Reported war situation (as confirmed per 31 January)

- Mr Debretsion, ousted leader of the Tigray regional government, who left Mekelle after the Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF) started an offensive on the capital, made a statement. He calls the war in Tigray 'a genocide'. Debretsion defended the 'constitutional right' of the Tigray people to hold democratic elections and he denounced the 'collective punishment' for the exercise of this right.
- Debretsion addressed the people of Tigray and also the international community. He stated: "It is imperative that you fully grasp the magnitude of the atrocities being committed by the Ethiopian and Eritrean aggressors as well as other foreign powers. They are attacking the people of Tigray to exterminate them with bullets and weaponized hunger. The international community must recognize its responsibility and exercise its maximum efforts to bring these criminal aggressors Abiy Ahmed and Isaias Afewerki [committing grave crimes against humanity] to an international court."
- Reported that six young girls were raped by ENDF soldiers in Mekelle city and threatened to not report it to anyone or even seek any medical care. But one of them came to get medical help and fled after hearing they were looking for her at her coffee shop (a small cafe like place for drinking traditional coffee) without the termination of her treatment. She said: "when we asked them why they are raping us, while we are all Ethiopians and brothers and sisters, they said your father is Dr. Debretsion and ours is Dr. Abiy. We are not all the same."
- Report that women working in the mill house were raped in Mekelle, kebele 17. The ENDF soldiers went into the establishment, scared the men off and raped the women while they were at work.
- Report that in Mekelle, 'Ayder' sub city, women aged 18 and 20 were raped by Ethiopian defense forces in broad daylight.
- A doctor in Axum reported that people are scared to assist and help rape victims. The Eritrean and ENDF soldiers shot people who try to assist when women cry and try to escape the raping soldiers. Not only people who try to help but also people who see the rape scene by accident are shot to death. Because of this, it has become a custom in Adwa and Axum to not give help even when you hear women cry out loud for help in time of rape and danger.
- Witness states that Eritrean soldiers in Tigray abuse Tigray citizens, stating their mission is to kill all citizens over 7 years of age: "You are all an ungrateful bunch of lice. If we followed orders, all of you above the age of 7 would be dead. That is the mission we were given. We were told to exterminate you – all of you. If you don't stop crying – we will kill the children too."
- Reported from Mekelle: people observe that Ethiopian soldiers leave the city in great numbers in an ordered way. It is said that they will be replaced by soldiers who are now deployed to inner Tigray.
- Reported from Mekelle that there is heavy fighting near Samre. There is an increase in the number of Eritrean soldiers in Wukro, and there are fewer Ethiopian soldiers, who seem to retreat.
- Fierce fighting between ENDF allied forces and Tigray regional forces reported around the Kola Tembien area, according to TMH.
- In the Tembien area front most of the ENDF allied forces are destroyed and some are on the run towards Mekelle and others are surrounded by Tigray regional forces, according to TMH.

- TMH reports that artifacts and holy books of two monasteries (Asura Metira - recently renovated by GIZ and Michael Barka) found in Atsbi Wenberta district have been completely looted and destroyed by Eritrean troops.
- Reports that four divisions of Eritrean forces (29, 53, 71 infantries, and 49 mechanized) led by General Eyob (aka 'Halibay') are now roaming in the Central areas of Tigray and they are looting and killing civilians.
- Eritrean Brigadier Gen. Eyob "Halibay" Fessahaye was jailed for alleged corruption in the early 1990s; after having been in jail for five years (during which time he carried out two attempts of suicide), he was released and eventually promoted to command the Eritrean Special Forces, Esayas elite commandos, and was in charge of coordination with the Office of President Esayas.
- A list of names has been compiled of 166 Tigrayan civilians allegedly killed by Eritrean troops in Aksum across different villages in an indiscriminate killing in what is called a 'door-to-door' search and shooting spree as well as from an artillery shelling by Eritrean troops invading on Axum across different villages. The list shows 158 men (6 priests), 8 women and 2 unnamed relatives. A list is published of 1031 'verified' names of civilians killed in Tigray. The list is available on <https://tghat.com/victim-list/>
- Hatespeech published on 27 October 2020 by an Amhara activist on tiktok - a week before the war in Tigray started, states the intention of a collaborative action between Eritrea and Amhara to overthrow Tigray and divide Tigray between the two parties.
- The translation of the hate speech message reads: "We will deinstall/disintegrate and give half of it [Tigray] to Eritrea. We will bring Axum to Amhara and give the rest to others [Eritrea]. Where the fuck will you go after? If Amhara is strong, we can do this. We can divide Tigray for the two of us. We bring Axum to us and the other we give to Asmara. Then Tigrayans will be eliminated entirely after that. It is over, whether you like it or not. If you don't submit to the feet, to what you deserve, you will see, we will do this. You will return Axum [to Amhara], and we will give the other part to Eritrea. And we can, we can do this, it's only about time."
- Unconfirmed reports in social media that the Ethiopian Telecom server in Tigray (Mekelle) has been transferred to Asmara, Eritrea. This is confirmed in the location registered on-line (Maekel region).

Reported Regional situation (as confirmed per 31 January)

- Three Sudanese merchants have been kidnapped by an Ethiopian militia group consisting of seven men in Gadarif state. The militia raiding party is now demanding a ransom of 3.6 million Sudanese pounds after seizing the men 7km inside the Fashaga triangle.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 31 January)

- Eritrean psycho-therapist and human rights activist Selam Kidane analyses the background to the "cruelties" committed by the Eritrean troops in Tigray: "Many around the world are baffled by the accounts of cruelty that is being perpetrated by the Eritrean army as consistently reported from victims across Tigray."
- Kidane states: "It has been sudden, totally unexpected and extremely brutal, perpetrated against people who are to all intents and purposes (innocent) kin. Victims ask 'why?' Fellow Eritreans are baffled and many in the international community ask 'how?' How is it possible that a young army of mostly conscripts who were forcibly recruited from across Eritrea perpetrate a level of cruelty that is seldom seen?"

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 74 - 02 February 2021

[Europe External Programme with Africa](#) is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 01 February)

- Heavy fighting between Tigray Regional Forces and Ethiopian/Eritrean forces in areas between Semema and Edaga Berhe. It is reported that the Tigray Regional Forces have burned nine armoured vehicles. The information comes from commanders of Tigray Forces stationed in this battlefield.
- Another active fighting at the moment is at Wukro Maray, 15 kms West of Aksum. The other side at this front is dominated by Eritrean Forces. Tigray Regional Forces is selectively fighting the huge new force of combined Ethiopian and Eritrean forces that entered in the second campaign.
- Reported ambush on ENDF allied forces convoy at Wukro Maray town, near Shire, by Tigray regional forces. Meanwhile heavy fighting is reported for the third consecutive day in the Kola Tembien area.
- Reported that a Tigrayan businessman named Yibrah Teame was allegedly murdered in the Bademe area by Eritrean troops (TMH).
- Reported in direct communication with the political and military TPLF leadership that there are regular contacts with Dr. Debretsion, who is leading political mobilization and military operations.
- Sadistic perpetration of sexual violence reported. Report received that a girl from Abyi Adi was shot 4 times on her hands by a soldier who first went into their home asking where 'woyane' (a term for people in Tigray) is. Her father, a blind man, responded they didn't know and he was ordered to rape his own child. He was taken into another room and beaten by another soldier after he strongly refused. The girl was then ordered 'lawtash'. (This is an offensive term widely used referring to sexual intercourse in the context of violence or rape). When she refused, he fired a shot wounding her left hand small finger and then followed it with three shots on her right arm leaving her now amputated.
- Reported that a girl from Abyi Adi was presented to the emergency room at Ayder Hospital after being raped and then shot on her thighs multiple times by ENDF soldiers.
- Report received on another girl from Abyi Adi who was raped by an ENDF soldier. He asked her to go and buy him cigarettes. As she went, he followed her and told her to have sex with him using the term 'lawtash'. When she refused, he hit her leaving her behind unconsciously. It is reported that "she was lucky enough to be brought to Ayder and provided with care, unlike many other girls."
- Photos received with houses completely destroyed by heavy artillery in Mekelle.
- An overview of health facilities paints a dire picture. In general, health facility services including maternity and emergency services were shut down across the Tigray region. The life saving essential services including those who had follow up cases are deprived, for example in Hawzen, Fatsi, H/Selam primary hospitals, Abyi Adi, Adwa and Wukro hospitals and other sites. As a result of this both home and facility deaths are alarmingly increasing.
- Almost all health facilities found in Central, Eastern, North West and Western zones of Tigray are still not functional. Medical equipment and medications were stolen; doors and windows broken.
- Photos received of ambulances destroyed in the war in Tigray. Pictures show that Wukro Maray primary hospital and Selekleka hospital has been heavily looted and destroyed, reportedly by ENDF allied forces and Eritrean troops.

- Original audio recording received of the meeting held at Mekelle University between staff and the interim Tigray government head, Dr. Mulu Nega. He said the Ethiopian government does not have the capacity to get the Eritrean soldiers out of Tigray. In this meeting many questions were raised on the levels of damage that the war has brought to the people of Tigray and its institutions.
- The General Attorney of Ethiopia stated today that the number of people killed in Mai Kadra is exaggerated. The conclusion came after studying the situation on the ground for a month.
- The Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) calls for an independent investigation into the Mai Kadra massacre.

Reported Regional situation (as confirmed per 01 February)

- Reported on Saturday that Ethiopian militia entered 7 km into Sudan and kidnapped three merchants, subsequently, the Sudanese army sent additional military reinforcements to the area. Sudanese protesters closed the Gallabat land border crossing with Ethiopia after the three merchants were kidnapped, demanding their immediate release. (Asharq Al-Awasat)

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 01 February)

- Tsedale Lemma, Editor in chief of Addis Standard, spoke with the U.S. Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and laid out key priorities for the US Foreign Policy in its engagement with Ethiopia and the ongoing armed conflict in Tigray, Ethiopia's upcoming elections and instability.
- Tsedale Lemma recommended the immediate withdrawal of Eritrean forces from Tigray; immediate and binding cessation of hostilities by all parties involved in the conflict; immediate distribution of humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable and a UN mandated, politically insulated independent investigation into the atrocities committed in Tigray.
- The Finnish minister of Foreign Affairs, Pekka Haavisto, is going to Ethiopia and countries in the region on an EU fact finding mission. The EU is concerned about the situation and the rising tensions.
- Haavisto states that "Nearly three months after the start of the conflict ... the security situation in Tigray remains dire, with reports of localised fighting especially in rural areas."
- Jan Egeland, Secretary General of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), states that "twelve weeks since the start of conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region, meaningful humanitarian operations have still not begun. Aid organisations are unable to reach the Central and Western parts of the region, and two refugee camps are completely inaccessible."
- NRC states that "In the few instances where agencies are accessing the region, it is limited to areas along major roads or the capital Mekelle. Aid workers face an unpredictable approval process with blurred lines of authorizations, as well as unclear and shifting approval procedures."
- Jan Egeland, Secretary General of the NRC states that "In all my years as an aid worker, I have rarely seen a humanitarian response so impeded and unable to deliver in response for so long, to so many with such pressing needs. As an international community, we are clearly failing to deliver against the humanitarian imperative we are facing."
- "Ethiopia's military and government stands accused of purposeful ethnic cleansing, a precursor to all-out genocide," writes World Peace Foundation Pres Emeritus Robert Rotberg on the war in Tigray.
- Ethiopia issues a press release on its strategy concerning debt repayments and rescheduling. The Financial Times (FT) reports that Ethiopia has asked donor countries for debt relief as Covid takes a toll.
- "There are 2.3 million people in need of lifesaving assistance in Ethiopia's Tigray region. Humanitarian aid is available, but access has been extremely limited", said Amnesty International.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 75 - 03 February 2021

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Reported war situation (as confirmed per 02 February)

- Over 50,000 civilians have been killed in the Tigray war, write three opposition parties of the Tigray region in a joint press release. The three political parties urge the international community to intervene before a “humanitarian disaster of biblical proportion will become a gruesome reality.”
- Reported that 20,000 refugees are missing from two camps for Eritrean refugees in Tigray. The camps, Shemelba and Hitsats, were destroyed, said the United Nations.
- Independent news forum Ethio-Forum (31/1) reports that politician Yilekal Getnet said Ethiopia started the war in Tigray after an agreement had been made in secret between the PM Abiy, Essayas Afwerki and Ginbot 7. Yilka Getnet, is the leader of the opposition Ethiopian National Movement.
- Yilekal says that the humanitarian crisis in Tigray, the Mai Kadra massacre and the damage to the ENDF are not the cause of the war, but the consequences. He blames the Abiy administration for the political and security crisis and states that the agreement made in secret has played a major role.
- The statement issued by the three Tigrayan political parties states that the international community should ensure the immediate withdrawal of Eritrean troops in Tigray. The statement was signed by the Tigray Independence Party, the National Congress of Great Tigray and Salsay Weyane Tigray.
- The three political parties also urge an independent investigation into the conflict, dialogue, more humanitarian aid and media access to “cover what is happening in the region.”
- "Towns and villages have been demolished by blind artillery shelling. Our health and educational facilities have been looted and destroyed and, to the surprise of any sane mind, our religious institutions have also been attacked and their sacred possessions plundered," the three parties added.
- Grandi, the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees, stated that many refugees “were caught in crossfire, abducted and forced to return to Eritrea under duress by Eritrean forces”, citing testimony presented to him during a visit to refugee camps in Tigray.
- Grandi called on the Ethiopian government to do more to protect civilians in the Tigray region. “I have a responsibility (..) to help minimise and eliminate the impact on civilians of this situation.”
- Grandi states the situation in Tigray is extremely grave and urgent support is necessary to prevent the situation worsening. “Our main priority is to gain access to deliver aid and protection.”
- AP reports that DX Open Network nonprofit found “further destruction at the Hitsats and Shimelba camps in recent weeks by unnamed armed groups, with humanitarian facilities among those targeted.”
- Ethio-Forum details that the Federal Attorney General of Ethiopia stated that reports of various organizations with regard to the number of people killed at Mai Kadra is inflated: “Most of the reports on the number of people killed in Mai Kadra shows exaggeration” said the Vice Federal Attorney General, Mr. Fekadu Tsega. “An examination made by the government tells that the number of people killed at Mai Kadra is far less than the reports published earlier by many media outlets.”

- Ethio-Forum reports that residents of Mekelle said that ENDF allied forces are confiscating their mobile phones. Especially residents found with pictures of Dr. Debretsion, other TPLF officials and flag of Tigray regional state in their mobile phones are intimidated and beaten whilst their phones are confiscated. According to the sources, Eritrean soldiers dressed in ENDF uniform are the main perpetrators of mobile phone confiscation.
- Ethio-Forum reports that many people in Tigray said the Interim government of Tigray is intimidating and forcing members of TPLF to change their membership to Prosperity Party and if they refuse, they will be killed. This is related to a letter from the head of the Tigray Prosperity Party, Mr. Nebiyu Sehul.
- Reported that mothers in labour are dying at home because of preventable childbirth complications. Even in Mekelle, mothers are dying. An example is two maternal deaths that happened in Mekelle (one in Adishumdihun and Endagebreale Kebelle 19) because of preventable birth complications, post-partum hemorrhage (PPH) and hypertension.
- It is reported that following the invasion of Ethiopian National forces in Mekelle, services collapsed in Ayder Referral Hospital (ARH), the highest level serving hospital of the region. Even women in labor could not be admitted for delivery at the hospital, as the military forces on duty denied women entry for delivery services in the hospital after 6:00PM (because of the curfew), referring to the declaration of emergency state law.
- Reported that almost all health care professionals (HCP) were left in the health facilities in Tigray, because of the fear for bombing and “massive killing” of civilians’ by the Ethiopian and Eritrean troops.
- In one instance, the duty skilled birth attendants/midwives left a laboring mother alone at the delivering room in Nebelet health center (HC), to save their own lives.
- Health professionals and eye-witnesses report different rape cases in Mekelle and other cities of Tigray. It is reported that many of the girls that come to the clinics are not only sexually assaulted and raped but they are also brutally beaten and bruised all over their bodies.
- Reported that in Humera, a young girl aged 13 was raped by Amhara militia while in her house after being separated from her parents. After being discovered by her family and on her way to the hospital they were all shot and killed before they could reach the hospital.
- A researcher comments that “looking at all the rape cases so far, the assaults are not random; they are a weapon of war.”

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 02 February)

- In a letter addressed to the National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE), the opposition party National Movement of Amhara (NaMA) demands an apology for hate messages displayed on banners at a rally organized in Oromia regional state in support of PM Abiy.

Reported Regional situation (as confirmed per 02 February)

- Yasser Abbas, Sudan’s Irrigation Minister, has warned Ethiopia against a planned second phase filling of GERD without signing an agreement with the stakeholders.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 02 February)

- The UN Security Council will discuss the situation in Tigray behind closed doors on 3 Feb.
- In a phone call with PM Abiy, Germany Chancellor Angela Merkel “underscored the significance of a peaceful solution to the conflict in the Tigray region and of humanitarian supplies to the people affected”. Merkel added that “humanitarian aid organizations and media must be granted free access”.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 76 - 04 February 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 03 February)

- Reported that refugee camps were systematically destroyed, by the DX Open Network: “These cumulative damage assessments show a campaign to degrade, destroy both the Hitsats and Shimelba refugee camps from November 24 to January 27.”
- The Network reports: “There are clear and consistent patterns across both camps over a two month period demonstrating that these refugee camps were systematically targeted, despite their protected humanitarian status.”
- Vice reports the findings of the Network: “the destruction was systemic, and residential areas, clinics, and schools were targeted in what appears to have been an attempt at preventing future use of the facilities. Further, a significant number of military vehicles and soldiers are visible in and around the camps soon after the time of the destruction, which appears to point to their complicity in the razing.”
- Fierce fighting between ENDF allied forces (including Eritrean forces) and Tigray regional forces was reported today 03/21 in the Southern zone of Tigray.
- A spokesperson of the Tigray Regional Forces, Gebre Gebretsadik, states that there was fierce fighting between Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) allied forces and Tigray regional forces at Hedeg Wered, an area between Edaga Berhe and Aa'det. (DW)
- At the Hedeg Wered front, 2 infantry battalions and one supportive battalion of the ENDF 25th division were ambushed and completely destroyed by Tigray regional forces. The vice commander of the division and commander of the battalions were reportedly killed.
- Report that on 31 Jan 2021, more than 1.200 Eritrean soldiers travelled from Aksum to Wukro Maray. They were ambushed at Minaba (between Aksum and Wukro Maray) by Tigray regional forces. 120 Eritrean soldiers were killed and 235 were wounded. Eritrean soldiers retreated back to Aksum. (DW)
- 01 Feb, 2021, Eritrean forces returned with reinforcements. There was heavy fighting in Minaba. (DW)
- In the fighting on 1 Feb in Minaba, the 2nd and 3rd brigades of ENDF 25th division and one brigade of Eritrean forces fought against the Tigray regional forces. On the ENDF/Eritrean side it is estimated that more than 2.000 soldiers together participated. During this fight, more than 270 soldiers were killed and more than 350 soldiers were wounded. (DW)
- The Tigray regional forces state that the ENDF and Eritrean forces were defeated in Minaba. (DW)
- Reported that in Samre, after fighting during the last days, the area is now quiet.
- It is reported from Mekelle that two days ago a Bajaj driver was shot near Mekelle university. It was evening and he was slightly late, so he was killed with a shot through the window. The young girl with him was not hit and stayed in the bajaj the entire night.
- It is reported that the health system is severely suffering from the war. It is reported that health workers died in Wukro, Humera, and AbiAdi, including a midwife nurse from Ayder hospital.

- Transport interruptions to and from Mekelle have seriously affected medical services. Critical patients could not reach Ayder Hospital. Chronic patients at the hospital were left to die.
- Reported that there were three maternal deaths in Mekelle in the first week of the conflict alone due to delays in reporting to the hospital.
- The health sector suffers from shortage of medications and medical appliances. Hospitals could not buy drugs for two reasons. Firstly there were no providers. All stores were closed and empty. Secondly the banks were not working. Donations from abroad were stranded in Addis Ababa. The biggest problems were reportedly seen in dialysis medications, insulin, Heparine, TAT and anesthesia drugs.
- Pictures from the Veterinary school of Mekelle University show that the place is completely ransacked.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 03 February)

- Reported that Ethiopia has arrested 15 people accused of plotting an attack on the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Addis Ababa. A second attack was allegedly planned on the Embassy in Sudan.
- Concern over the lack of aid provision. 16 UN agencies and 25 NGOs have applied to provide aid, but so far only provisions are allowed through and these are stored in warehouses in Mekelle.

Reported International situation (as confirmed per 03 February)

- Tigray discussed today in the UN Security Council. Ireland calls for humanitarian actors to be given sustained, impartial, safe and unimpeded access; restoration of basic services; and all parties to comply with humanitarian and human rights law.
- President Macron called today with PM Abiy.
- Republicans have called on the Biden administration to help put an end to a humanitarian and security crisis in Tigray. Congressional republicans, led by Senate Foreign Relations committee ranking member Jim Risch (R., Idaho) and House Foreign Affairs Committee ranking member Michael McCaul (R., Texas), said that President Joe Biden must act to alleviate the human rights crisis emerging in Tigray.
- McCaul said Biden must “demand accountability”: “We still do not know the full extent of atrocities committed against civilians in Tigray, and the conflict has resulted in a staggering humanitarian crisis. We must demand accountability, elevate our diplomatic engagement with the government of Ethiopia, and work with our allies and partners to prevent further destabilization in the region.”
- Risch said that “we encourage [the Biden White House] to continue to push Ethiopian officials to abandon efforts that further the conflict” and “There is much bipartisan, bicameral support for such efforts. ... Ethiopia's federal government needs to engage in a comprehensive and inclusive national dialogue with the many different political and ethnic factions in Ethiopia.”
- More than 350 former Peace Corps volunteers and three former U.S. ambassadors have written to U.S. congressmen to press for humanitarian aid to all parts of Tigray, to urge the United Nations to investigate and to advocate for media access to the region “to document human rights abuses.”
- Isabella Olson, a former peace corps volunteer said communication links remain difficult to many parts of the Tigray region and only a small number of volunteers have reached friends there. “We have avoided explicit discussions on what is occurring due to safety concerns and our acute awareness that the Ethiopian government is monitoring the calls,” Isabella added.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 77 - 05 February 2021

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Reported international situation (as confirmed per 04 February)

- Reported that in a recent audio recording, recorded secretly in a cabinet meeting of the interim regional Tigray administration, led by Dr Mulu, cabinet members said that they are administering “almost only Mekelle.” The rest of Tigray is controlled by Amhara and Eritrean forces.
- The cabinet members asked the question: “how can the Amhara region take Southern and Western Tigray without constitutional change?” They stated: “unless we answer these questions, the people of Tigray can never accept them.”
- Dr Mulu explains during the meeting that he was told in Addis that the administration zones of Tigray will remain the same and that the aim of the military actions was only law enforcement and not a restructuring of administrative areas.
- AP reports that “Eritrean forces are almost everywhere in Tigray.” The source traveled across Tigray.
- All members of the United Nation Security Council (UNSC) called for increased humanitarian access during a closed-door meeting to discuss the humanitarian situation in the Tigray.
- The meeting had been requested by Ireland and Estonia, France, Norway, Britain and the United States.
- French President Macron and German Chancellor Merkel urged PM Abiy to increase aid access.
- U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken spoke with Abiy calling for “immediate, full and unhindered humanitarian access to prevent further loss of life.”
- Barbara Woodward, the U.K.’s permanent representative to the UN stated that the UN SC members all shared the view that “the incremental progress” of opening humanitarian access so far is not enough.
- A report by the Famine Early Warning Systems Network finds that in the coming weeks more parts of central and eastern Tigray will enter Emergency Phase 4. This is one step below famine.
- Reported that people are dying from hunger in Aksum, Tembien, Shire and Zalambessa. In Adigrat, water shortage is forcing people to drink from rivers. Fearing attacks, some are hiding in caves.
- The United Kingdom has condemned the destruction of the two refugee camps, Shemelba and Hitsats, in Tigray, and calls for urgent assistance to the Eritrean refugees who have been displaced.
- Reported that UN Humanitarian Assistance Chief, Lowcock, told the UNSC that there are reports of Eritrean refugees being attacked, killed, abducted and taken back to Eritrea.
- Fillipo Grandi, the UN’s High Commissioner for Refugees, said this week that 15,000 to 20,000 Eritrean refugees are missing after the Hitsats and Shimelba refugee camps in Tigray were flattened.
- Vice reports that military trucks were pictured by satellite around the time that the refugee camps, Shimelba and Hitsats, were destroyed.

- The damage in the two refugee camps is extensive. The latest pictures, taken on January 27, show up to 721 structures damaged and 531 destroyed. 99 of those are catastrophically or extensively damaged. The intent seemed to have been to make sure the camps could no longer be used.
- The damage to the Shimelba and Hitsats camps is a lot more extensive than was originally estimated. A previous report by AP news estimated that only 400 buildings had been destroyed.
- The former deputy director of the Somali Intelligence Agency has said that young Somalis were being forced to fight for Eritrea and Tigray and that he spoke to some of them.
- Al-Shabaab militants have reportedly captured the Warmahan town in Somalia. During the attack, three Somali soliders were killed and others wounded.
- A State Department Spokesperson said that the Biden Administration considers the appointment of a special Envoy for the Greater Horn of Africa.
- Biden will announce an end to US support for offensive operations against Houthis in the Yemen war.

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 04 February)

- Fighting is going on in Yechila, 50-60 km South of Abi Adi between the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) and Tigray regional forces. Yechila is on the border between Tigray and Amhara. According to sources from the battlefield, 59 ENDF soldiers were killed and 9 captured.
- A fire was detected near Edaga Arbi, a region where continued fighting has been reported.
- Reports of fighting between ENDF allied forces and Tigray regional forces in Temien and Maychaw.
- Al Arabiya reported that Ethiopian troops attacked the Sudanese army at Al-Fashaqa region, inside the Sudanese border today. Sudanese forces repulsed the attack and dozens of Ethiopian troops were killed.
- Satellite imagery near the vicinity of Mekelle University Arid campus shows a major fire damage next to a building used for cattle farming. This happened in January.
- Footage has emerged of shelling of the Amanuel Orthodox Church. The church, situated near the badly damaged Al Negash Mosque, was also shelled. The shelling happened previously.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 04 February)

- FANA, the Ethiopian government broadcaster, announced that the government has set up a task force to investigate the allegations of sexual violence in Tigray. The task force will be composed of members from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs (MoWCYA), the Ministry of Defence, and the Federal Attorney General. The task force has arrived in Mekelle to begin investigations.
- Ethio-Forum reported that L.General Molla Hailemariam, Chief commander of ENDF infantry forces, is under house arrest since 04/11/2020. There is a report that his brother Mr. Guesh was killed in his office by Eritrean troops in Mekelle on 08/12/2020.
- Politician Mr. Lidetu Ayalew was prevented from boarding a U.S. flight today by government forces. Mr. Lidetu, a leader of an opposition party, was travelling to the U.S. for medical reasons.

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<http://www.fanabc.com/english/a-task-force-starts-investigating-alleged-sexual-violence-in-tigray/>
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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 78 - 06 February 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 05 February)

- Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General, states that the situation in Tigray continues to be extremely alarming and is deteriorating rapidly.
- Dujarric states that the humanitarian response is entirely inadequate to the needs.
- The spokesperson states that humanitarian access remains restricted due to bureaucratic obstacles and due to insecurity on the ground.
- Humanitarian aid workers are prevented from accessing and helping victims from the conflict.
- According to the UN, 80 humanitarian workers are ready in Addis Ababa to travel to Tigray but are stuck in Addis Ababa for a month as they have not been receiving the necessary permits.
- Whilst 250.000 people have been reached, 4.2 million people need food aid and other assistance.
- Especially people in rural areas are not being reached by the aid efforts.
- The UN is assisting victims of gender-based violence across the Amhara and Tigray region.
- Fewer than one third out of the total number of people that the UN and humanitarian partners are trying to reach have access to water.
- Father Mussie Zerai, a priest of the Archdiocese of Asmara, Eritrea, says: "Today there is hunger in Tigray. There is talk of starvation in Tigray, because there are many areas not reached by humanitarian aid. I fear that hunger is being used as a tool of punishment and to force all forms of resistance to surrender. All of this is a crime against humanity."
- Father Mussie Zerai, who works with migrants, states that 10,000 Eritrean refugees under international protection in Tigray were deported back to Eritrea by Eritrean troops. The refugees were under the protection of Ethiopia which failed to prevent the deportations.
- The Eritrean refugees that have been deported, were sheltered in two camps, Shemelba and Hitsats in Tigray, Ethiopia. Fr Mussie Zerai said that 10,000 of the refugees were deported to Eritrea.
- The Eritrean refugees which are deported to Eritrea face punishment, torture and indefinite compulsory national services, a form of forced labour, which the UN has classified as a Crime against Humanity.
- The Eritrean refugees had fled political persecution, compulsory indefinite military service, classified as a Crime against Humanity.
- UNHCR spokesperson, Mr. Baloch, states that UNHCR estimates that 15-20,000 refugees from the two camps are dispersed in areas where UNHCR does not have access.
- Baloch states that UNHCR workers have not had access to the two refugee camps in Tigray, Shemelba and Hitsats. It has been reported that the camps are entirely destroyed and made uninhabitable.

- The UN special adviser on the prevention of genocide, Alice Wairimu Nderitu, said on Friday that she has received reports of “serious human rights violations and abuses, committed by the parties to the conflict in the Tigray region and their allies. These include extrajudicial killings, sexual violence, looting of property, mass executions and impeded humanitarian access.”
- Nderitu is alarmed by “the continued escalation of ethnic violence in Ethiopia and allegations of serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights in the Tigray region.”
- Nderitu states that “if urgent measures are not immediately taken to address the ongoing challenges facing the country, the risk of atrocity crimes in Ethiopia remains high and likely to get worse.”

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 05 February)

- European Parliament will debate the situation in Tigray in plenary on Thursday 11 February. The European Union has been active in addressing the crisis in Tigray, with concerted actions from the EU institutions and Member States.
- EU Member States have been able to ensure that the dramatic situation in Tigray has remained on the agenda of the UN Security Council during the last three months.
- Experts call on the US to also step up actions in concertation with the AU and the EU.
- It is suggested that incoming U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., Linda Thomas-Greenfield, could call on the U.N. Emergency Relief Coordinator and the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide the U.N. Security Council with “frank and comprehensive briefings on the humanitarian and human rights situation in areas under the control of the Ethiopian army and forces allied with it, as well as areas under the control of the TPLF.”
- Experts suggest that Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield can push the U.N. Emergency Directors to meet and declare Tigray an “L3 Emergency” – this is “the highest level of urgency that allows the U.N. humanitarian agencies to quickly mobilize staff and resources.”
- A L3 emergency move should also “trigger a special urgent donor appeal for the crisis in Tigray outside of the annual country Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), which do not include those who have sought refuge in neighboring Sudan. To be effective, this appeal will require early and urgent funding to make a difference.”
- The experts advise that USAID Administrator Samantha Power should send a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to address the situation in Tigray: “The scale, urgency, and complexity of the crisis certainly justify – if not require – the deployment of a DART.”
- Experts emphasize that the White House should press Eritrea to pull its forces back across the border in Eritrea and withdraw all troops from Tigray.
- Experts advise that Secretary of State Antony Blinken must “urgently appoint a special envoy for the Horn of Africa to help oversee a regional diplomatic strategy. Blinken has already told senators that he would consider such a move. A special envoy could also help coordinate efforts of the African Union, the European Union, and Ethiopia’s bilateral benefactors.”

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 79 - 08 February 2021

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Reported war situation (as confirmed per 07 February)

- Ethiopian Airlines has stopped flying to Gondar, Bahir Dar and Lalibela, destinations in the Amhara region, due to bad weather. A counterclaim is that the flight interruption is due to security problems as Sudan now controls airspace of especially Western Amhara.
- Eritrea is expanding its presence in Tigray, despite international calls that it must withdraw. The expansion includes mechanised divisions. Videos appear of Eritrean troops entering Mekelle in trucks and buses. In Wukro the number of Ethiopian troops has been reduced and Eritrean troops increased.
- Fighting reported near Samre, Nekseged, and Korem. This is part of the attack of the 'final phase' and the Ethiopian Federal Defence forces and Eritrean forces have moved to many places in Tigray.
- Movement of Eritrean armored vehicles from North Tigray to South Tigray, near Maychew and Samre.
- Reported that Tigray regional forces continue fighting. Last week, ENDF senior officers were killed: Col Kedir Bekele, 25th div; Serg Zekaris Goshu, Transport, 25th div and Serg Hussien, 2nd brig of 25th div.
- There are 68.000 Internally Displaced People in Mekelle. Most of the IDPs are displaced from the western part of the Tigray region. Many of these are quartered in schools and colleges.
- There are many IDPs around Shire. The IDPs are sheltered in the Shire campus of Aksum university, sites in the town of Shire, the Shire Preparatory School and the Primary School. The majority of the IDPs come from the Western part of Tigray, fleeing occupation by Amhara regional forces and militia.
- In the Shire campus of Aksum, there are 40.000 IDPs, including 6.000 children under 5 years. Pictures have emerged of their living conditions, which show very poor facilities, including on construction sites. There are over 400 pregnant and lactating mothers and more than 800 people with chronic diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension, epilepsy, bronchial asthma and HIV. Seven of them have died.
- According to reports, 1.500 people have reported that their cars have been stolen or are missing. The head of the Tigray bureau of Road and Transport says the cars are with Eritrean and Ethiopian soldiers.
- Following border clashes, Sudan controls new areas from Amhara militias in the disputed territory.
- Report by Eritrean refugees that at the start of the war, Eritrean forces entered the Hitsats refugee camp, where Eritrean refugees stayed under international protection. The Eritrean forces captured representatives of refugees from the Agency for Refugees and Returnees Administration (ARRA).
- Eritrean refugees report that Eritrean forces continued to loot the camp and destroyed shelters. Tigray regional forces organised a transport to Shire town. However, Eritrean refugees were petrified. Some fled to places around the area. The Eritrean government forces took refugees who were hiding and took them to the border town of Badme. Refugees are now sent back to Eritrea, from where they fled.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 07 February)

- The World Food Programme and the Ethiopian government have come to an agreement about expanding aid to Tigray.

- Beasley, the WFP chief, said that there were between 2.6 and 3 million people that required immediate assistance. The nutrition situation is worse for children and pregnant/lactating mothers.
- The UN has agreed to provide relief for up to a million people. It will also launch a supplementary programme to help 875.000 nutritionally vulnerable children.
- Prime Minister Abiy has written an opinion column for the Project Syndicate magazine. He argues that the operations in Tigray were necessary to bring stability to the region.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 07 February)

- Pekka Haavisto, Finnish foreign minister and European Special Envoy, has arrived in Khartoum for a two day visit. He is there to help ease the tension between Ethiopia and Sudan and see how the EU and the international community can help. He will meet with Prime Minister Hamdok, Chairman of the Sovereignty Council Al-Burham, the Deputy Chairman, and the minister of water and Irrigation.
- After the two day visit to Sudan, Haavisto will fly to Khartoum to meet with Ethiopian leaders.
- Following his meeting with Haavisto, Sudanese the Prime Minister Sudan Hamdok said he “looks forward to the continuation of the African Union mediation to reach a binding agreement on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.” The Sudanese minister for Irrigation called for the inclusion of the United Nations in the negotiation process.
- Sudan has also reiterated its warning that continuation of the filling of the GERD dam could endanger its own dams and the lives of millions of people living in the region.
- The region of Puntland in Somalia has announced that it will cease to recognise Farmajoo as President from midnight on Sunday. There are tensions surrounding the upcoming elections in Somalia.
- The Global Society of Tigray Scholars writes to UNESCO President, Audrey Azoulay, referring to the 1972 World Heritage Convention and the Convention of the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. The scholars state that “there exist widespread and evidence-based reports of genocidal ethnic cleansing and killings, starvation through a deliberate isolation of the region, vandalization of public and private properties and destruction and looting of cultural and sacred sites.”
- The scholars state that “this is happening under total media blackout by a concerted effort of the Ethiopian Defense Forces, Eritrean Defense Forces and the Amhara Regional Special Forces and militia.”
- The scholars state that a unique part of humanity’s heritage is at risk, including UNESCO heritage old monolithic tomb markers that are 1,700 years old; the fragile rock churches and archeological sites that date to between 800-1000 AD.
- The Temple of Yeha dates back to ca. 5th - 8th BCE, near Axum, and is the oldest standing building in sub-Saharan Africa and is very fragile. It was the capital of the pre-Axumite Da-amt Kingdom. The temple needs protection.
- Michael Gervers, University of Toronto, states that “This is cultural cleansing. The (Ethiopian) government and Eritreans want to wipe out the Tigrayan culture.”
- The churches in Tigray contain some of the world’s rarest and oldest Christian manuscripts and evidence is mounting that many are taken by the occupying forces. The scholars conclude that the Ethiopian government, the Eritrean army and Amhara regional forces are engaged in heritage destruction and looting. The scholars state that the The Hague Convention mandates the international community to ensure the protection of cultural property during armed conflict.

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Links of interest

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/02/1084092>

https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/92710/pekka-haavisto-visit-sudan_en

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 80 - 09 February 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 08 February)

- Reported that UAE is evacuating its base in Assab, Eritrea, from where it engaged in the war in Tigray.
- Reported today from Agew at the border of Tigray, Ethiopia, that the Eritrean army “went in en masse”. The soldiers killed civilians today in Addi Awso near Samre.
- Reported today that fighting is ongoing near Shire in the direction of Aksum.
- Report today from Aksum that Federal Ethiopian soldiers are coming in and taking more control, while the Eritrean army is told to go into the countryside.
- Report from Wukro that there is a reduction of Ethiopian soldiers and an increase of Eritrean soldiers.
- Reported that of the 224 health facilities in Tigray, before the war, only 17 are operational at the moment. This information is based on info from the provisional administration in Tigray.
- A witness speaks of “very disturbing sadism” in an account of the war going from village to village on foot for two months. (published in: [Ethiopia insight](#))
- The witness states that “initially, the soldiers were primarily on the main roads. (..) But soon enough, no village, no matter how remote or difficult to reach would escape the wrath of the occupying forces.”
- The witness states that he saw Eritrean and Ethiopian forces engage “in the widespread killing of civilians; they would randomly shoot and loot, mainly (..) chickens, cows, and products such as honey.”
- Soldiers took anything they could find: “It was not just food that they took. They stole the clothes of farmers, their mattresses, and even cooking utensils. I also witnessed Eritrean soldiers taking jerrycans, plastic containers that people use to store water. Perhaps to deprive farmers of accessing water.”
- The witness states that “the soldiers used big trucks with Eritrea license plates to load looted goods. I saw many empty trucks with ER plates being driven towards central Tigray, and loaded trucks leaving towards Eritrea via the direction of Adwa and Axum.”
- The witness concludes that the Eritrean soldiers came prepared for looting: “They brought car mechanics with them to help them unlock cars, Sino trucks, and dozers. They took away some vehicles and burned others after taking out all the valuable items inside. I saw Eritrean soldiers doing this countless times across central Tigray.”
- According to the witness Ethiopian soldiers looked on and did not protect the civilians: “Ethiopian soldiers were idly watching the Eritrean soldiers as they did all this. Worse, some were praising them.”
- The witness reports sadism: “The soldiers would kill or ruin basic possessions such as animals, food, and other items. In Wukro, for instance, a relative of mine told me that Ethiopian soldiers put Omo detergent inside her food and her stored wheat so that they spoiled. Her case was not an exception. (..), it was typical of the occupying forces to take what they can and ruin the rest.”
- The witness reports hateful acts to civilians: “The relative told me her store was completely looted. Ethiopian soldiers stayed in her house for days, drinking. All her food was spoiled, her belongings

taken, and she is currently struggling to survive along with her children. In another village, residents told me that the soldiers would squash chicks under their feet.”

- The witness states that the invasion was “a mission of spite and destruction intended to break the people of Tigray physically and spiritually.”
- The witness states that in Aksum “Eritrean soldiers killed people by going house-to-house. A priest at Maryam Tsion Church told my friend when he visited him that they buried 243 people that day alone. The bodies were ordered not to be picked up and, again, people were shot for trying to collect them.”
- Disturbing footage published of an execution of young men on 5-6 January [published by Tghat](#) in western Tigray, in an area called Debre Abay, named after the famous Debre Abay monastery.
- According to the sources: “the Ethiopian and Eritrean military first started shelling a small town, called Mai Hrmaz, from far. Houses were destroyed and children killed. When they arrived at the small town, a fight with Tigray Defence Forces (TDF) started which lasted for two days.”
- According to sources: “around 500 Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers were killed in the fight. A reinforcement was then asked and sent to the location, but the fight was already over and Tigray Defence Forces were not in the area. Then the angry reinforcement force took its revenge on the town’s civilian population by massacring 100 of them, looting shops and houses.”
- Norwegian Refugee Service (NRC) states that buildings in Tigray, for refugees, were destroyed. A school and a health clinic were damaged and burned in the Hitsats and Shimelba refugee camps recently.
- Satellite images show that between 5 and 8 January 2021, NRC’s compound in the Hitsats refugee camp was burned down and that the roofs of the buildings were seriously damaged.
- Aid workers can not enter most rural areas in Tigray and the two refugee camps and surrounding areas.
- OCHA official Jens Laerke states that it was “less of a problem” to deliver food aid which is being warehoused in Mekelle. “The problem is...access both to get into Tigray in the first place and also getting from Mekelle into, into the countryside where most of the people in need are.”
- The Ethiopian officially dissolved the boards of Tigray Development Association (TDA), Tigray Veterans Association (TVA) and Relief Society of Tigray (REST) and formally decided to govern these institutions by 'a caretaker administrative board', undermining their independent status.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 08 February)

- The EU joins the United States’ call “for the withdrawal of Eritrean troops from Ethiopia, which are fuelling the conflict in Tigray, reportedly committing atrocities, and exacerbating ethnic violence.”
- Finnish Minister of Foreign Affairs and EU Envoy, Mr. Haavisto, visited Um Rakuba Camp in Sudan. He met with refugees who fled the Tigray Region, heard their stories and concerns.
- The EU expresses concern over the lack of progress in humanitarian access. Central and Western Tigray remain largely out of reach and two Eritrean refugee camps remain completely inaccessible.
- The statement added that humanitarian access needs to be guaranteed and humanitarian assistance allowed in line with humanitarian principles of impartiality, humanity, neutrality and independence.
- The EU is also increasingly concerned for the protection of civilians and refugees: “Access of international media to Tigray must be authorised and local journalists must be protected.”

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 08 February)

- Lidetu Ayalew, an Ethiopian politician, said that he was warned by an Ethiopian government official that Eritrean Pres Isaias would kill him if he continued to criticize Eritrea for intervening in Ethiopia.

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Links of interest

https://twitter.com/JMjalel_H/status/1358861181843345412?s=08

<https://www.ethiopia-insight.com/2021/02/08/the-sadism-is-very-disturbing-two-months-on-the-run-in-tigray/>

<https://www.tghat.com/2021/02/08/a-graphic-footage-of-the-debre-abay-massacre-what-do-we-know-about-it/>

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 81 - 10 February 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 09 February)

- *Unconfirmed* report received that a payment of 500mIn US dollars was made by Ethiopia to President Esayas of Eritrea and that Eritrea was provided with weapons for its participation in the war in Tigray.
- *Unconfirmed* report that when the National Security director of Eritrea visited Addis, he requested that the Ethiopian government would make the second additional payment of 500 mln USD so that Eritrean troops could do the 'final offensive' in Tigray.
- The understanding is that reportedly PM Abiy promised 1 billion USD to President Esayas from Eritrea, to be paid in two parts.
- In exchange, President Esayas from Eritrea offered his Indefinite National Service recruits to serve in the war in Tigray.
- National service troops of Eritrea have also been serving as mercenaries in the war in Yemen, despite the UN sanctions that were in place to curb Eritrea participation in regional destabilisation, until 2018.
- It is reported that the clashes between Ethiopia and Eritrea troops in Tigray a few weeks ago were caused by differences in the division of weapons between the two parties in the alliance. Reportedly many soldiers were killed on both sides.
- Ethiopia has closed two camps which previously sheltered internationally recognised Eritrean refugees in Tigray, Shemelba and Hitsats. Satellite footage shows the camps were completely destroyed. 20.000 refugees from the camps have disappeared and 10.000 are alleged to have been abducted to Eritrea.
- One year ago, President Esayas from Eritrea pressurised Ethiopia to close the four camps in Tigray. Many of the Eritrean refugees sheltered in the camps have fled the indefinite national service in Eritrea. It is a cruel practice which, according to the UN, constitutes a Crime against Humanity.
- It is reported from Eritrea that the situation there is absolutely desperate. Due to extremely harsh lock-down measures due to Covid-19, people have not been paid, there are no markets, small businesses are closed and people do not have work. People suffer from hunger and fight for survival.
- A delegation from the Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia travelled to Tigray for a 'peace conference' and to discuss humanitarian aid. The delegation included Daniel Kibret, a political advisor of PM Abiy.
- The delegation is composed of religious leaders, elders and members of the council, and planned to make a three day visit and meet with members of the community and stakeholders in Tigray. The delegation was intended to "hold discussions on the challenges faced during the law enforcement operation held in Tigray regional state, particularly damage caused to churches."
- The delegation would meet with "heads of churches and elders as well as regional government officials and security forces" in Tigray and it sent out invitations to religious leaders and elders in Tigray but the Tigray elders and religious leaders have refused to attend.
- The Patriarch Abune Mathias is reported to have declined the invitation to meet the delegation.
- All shops, hotels and transport are closed in Mekelle as a sign of opposition to the visit of the council.
- The youth of Mekelle took to the streets and burned tyres on roadways to pass the message that the delegates should leave Mekelle. The youth blocked many streets. For example the road from Axum

Hotel to Relief society of Tigray was blocked by angry youth. There was gunfire around Kebele 17 and 18 (southern part of the city), probably to disperse the youth.

- The reported hate speech alleged to some members of the delegation visiting Mekelle includes: a proposal to throw ten heavy bombs onto each town in Tigray and to kill a million ethnic Tigray 'to shorten the war' as a sustainable solution. The allegations of hate speech circulate in social media.
- The Ethiopian army responded by indiscriminately shooting at civilians and by mass arrests. There are multiple reports of people having been shot and killed, AFP confirmed one death; other sources claim at least four people have been killed; a doctor and staff from Ayder hospital claimed as many as ten people shot and very many wounded.
- Following a meeting with the Council, the provisional government administrator, Dr. Mulu stated that "the rumor that humanitarian aid has not reached the people is completely false, he said, adding that the federal government is working to solve the problem by setting up an emergency response center."
- The delegation cut the three-day visit short and left Mekelle today.
- Video footage of a corpse left behind on the street in Mekelle circulates in social media.
- In the area near the bus station of Wukro many leaflets have appeared with a message from the Tigray regional forces: starting from the 7th of the Ethiopian month (which is coming Sunday) there will be no transport any more. People understand from this that the TPLF is planning a big offensive.
- Transport between Mekelle and Wukro was stopped today.
- Groundreport of fighting between ENDF allied forces and Tigray regional forces in Guya, Kola Tembien; Tigray regional forces report they destroyed one battalion of Ethiopian/Eritrean forces.
- Reported that the Ethiopia/Eritrea alliance is attacked by the Tigray forces in May Keyah of Wajirat, about 50-60 km South of Mekelle.
- Report on the war in the Samre area: one person was killed in Samre town when the Eritrean army entered, five civilians were killed by the Eritrean army in Addi Awso.
- Report that the number of fighters of the Tigray forces is rapidly increasing.
- Reported that the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) Western Command, the 22nd Eagle Battalion is ready to protect the country's sovereignty from both "internal and external aggression". It is reported that the brigade has been inspecting the capacity of its heavy artillery and vehicles.
- Footage shows the destruction of the hilltop Amanuel Orthodox church in Tigray on November 24, 2020. The church was - according to the person who recorded the footage, shelled 17 times by artillery fired by tanks. The church is close to the Negash (al-Nejashi) mosque, possibly the oldest mosque in Africa, which has also been severely damaged.
- The Ethiopian government has given the green light to UN agencies to provide aid in Tigray. It allows 25 staff members to enter Tigray and start providing emergency relief. The UN says that 60 more aid workers are awaiting approval to enter Tigray but have not had permission to leave to the region.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 09 February)

- 200 Eritreans and Tigrayans in The Netherlands demonstrated today in front of the Parliament in The Hague to end the war and to demand justice, condemning the atrocities perpetrated in Tigray.
- A campaign has started asking the public to boycott buying flowers from Ethiopia. The campaign is specifically focused on Valentine's day and has slogans such as: "Lovely Valentine's day roses - but are they coming from a war zone? #Ethiopia is fighting a bitter war in Tigray."

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<https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/02/1084192>

<https://www.tghat.com/2021/01/26/tigray-heritage-at-risk-due-to-the-ar-on-tigray/>

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 82 - 11 February 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 10 February)

- Eritrean soldiers have told Tigrayan locals that they are being paid by Ethiopia for six months according to Dedebit Media today broadcasted in New South Wales.
- Eritrea earlier sent mercenaries to Yemen. The Eritrean government holds a large part of its population under indefinite national service, which according to the UN constitutes Crimes against Humanity.
- The Ethiopian Red Cross has said that over 80% of Tigray is cut off from aid and is unreachable. It warns that tens of thousands can starve.
- The Ethiopian Red Cross also estimates that people in need is up to 3.8 million. The last estimate in January put the number at 2.3 million.
- European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operation estimated that 4.5 million people in Tigray require emergency food assistance on Wednesday.
- Ethiopia is closing two refugee camps for Eritrean refugees, Shemelba and Hitsats, because of their "proximity to the border with Eritrea" states the head of the refugee administration. The camps were razed by Eritrean soldiers and 20.000 refugees have disappeared.
- "Many, many severe cases of malnutrition" state Red Cross, "emaciated" people who managed to escape rural areas still inaccessible in the fourth month of fighting. Displaced civilians reaching camps near major towns have skin on their bones and appear very malnourished.
- Ethiopian Red Cross President states that once humanitarian workers reach Tigray's rural areas, "we will see a more devastating crisis. We have to get prepared for the worst, is what I'm saying."
- Francesco Rocca, the chief of the ICRC, is in Tigray and has said that he was shocked at the situation. In a statement Rocca has said that half a million of IDP are around Mekelle, and that there is a critical shortage of "everything". Rocca has said that operations need to be scaled up.
- Rocca expresses shock at the "systematic aggression to health facilities" due to looting and damage.
- ENDF and Eritrean officers are training new soldiers in Axum University and around Adi Gebru near Endebaguna. Some ENDF soldiers are now found to be students from Ethiopian universities. Those captured by Tigray regional forces had university student ID-cards in their pocket.
- The total Number of IDPs in Mekelle, estimated by the Social Affairs Bureau, is 68,089. This estimated number is inclusive of IDPs staying in the schools, and with families or in churches, or other in streets.
- The total number of IDPs according to African Services Committee within all school campuses in Mekelle is 10,600. Out of this 1612 are under the age of 5 (M=802, F=810); 2745 are aged 6 - 14 (M=1432, F=1313); 5518 are aged 15 - 49 (M=2712, F=2806); 590 are aged above 50 (M=343, F=247).
- IDPs in Mekelle come from the North West zone (Humera), Western (Sheraro), Eastern Zone (Adigrat, Zalambesa, Hawzene), Central zone (Axum, Adwa and Tembien) and South Eastern Zone (Wajerat).
- Reports of hundreds of civilians arrested and shot by Eritrean and Ethiopian forces in Adigrat, Wukro and Freweyni towns of Tigray. Reported that dozens might have been killed.
- Stay at home protests continued in Mekelle and to some extent in Wukro.
- Video footage of ENDF beating and intimidating civilians in Tigray circulates in social media.

- Journalist and activist Meseret Daba was arrested in Addis Ababa by police forces today (10/02/21)
- Reports of a fighter jet was shot down in the Southern Tigray.
- Electricity was cut-off in the entire Tigray region today (10/02/2021).
- NRC Country director for Sudan states that a second refugee emergency is starting in Sudan: "people flee from Ethiopia into Blue Nile state, in addition to refugees from Tigray into Gedaref state."
- The UN Sexual and Reproductive Health Agency says that pregnant women are having difficulties finding support in Tigray. Where to give birth and under what conditions are major concerns for many pregnant women.
- One woman described her experience "I had to leave everything behind—my belongings, my jewellery, and my livelihood that gave me some independence and strength: my cooking set."
- UNFPA will also establish a women's safe space and a child-friendly space where women and children can seek mental health and psychosocial support and receive important information.
- The health situation for patients with HIV/AIDS and Diabetics is alarming. Lack of medication and food aggravate their health conditions. It was observed that the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) were taking antiretroviral drugs from public hospitals by force for their soldiers. IDPs can not access ART medication. Medicines are unavailable. There is a high risk of cholera outbreak.
- EU Envoy and Finnish Foreign minister Haavisto has visited a refugee camp of Tigray refugees in Sudan. Haavisto said that he had heard "concerning reports about human rights violations".
- Shemelba camp in Tigray sheltered ethnic Kunama people who were well settled without plans for onward migration. The closure of the camp, after it had been attacked by Eritrean soldiers, robs 15.000 refugees from their humble shelters and livelihoods, displacing them.
- New footage of Eritrean soldiers in Mekelle, including Eritrean soldiers dressed in Ethiopian uniforms.
- A Sudanese officer, a lieutenant, was killed by Ethiopian forces in Eastern Sudan while on patrol.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 10 February)

- Dep PM Demeke Mekonen accepted that Hitsats and Shimelba have been destroyed and looted. He said this in a briefing to diplomats in Addis today.
- Mekonnen did not respond to the EUs and U.S. demand that Eritrean troops leave Tigray immediately.
- The US committee for Refugees and Immigrants are calling for an independent UN investigation into the disappearances of refugees from camps in Tigray: "over 20,000 people are unaccounted for, and the UN believes they are dispersed in areas to which it does not have access. Credible accounts indicate that at least some of the missing are in critical danger, as refugees have reported that armed actors infiltrated the camps, killed, raped and abducted people, and Eritrean troops have forced some of the refugees back to Eritrea."
- A plenary debate is scheduled in the European Parliament on the humanitarian situation in Ethiopia on Thursday (11th February) CET 14:30 and 16:30 [webstreaming](#).

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Links of interest

<https://addisstandard.com/news-ethiopia-deeply-concerned-by-eu-statement-on-tigray-stays-silent-on-accusations-of-eritreas-role-in-the-armed-conflict/?fbclid=IwAR1sOR6SH18ORC2O6Pwc8UxizkRDHZxns18HuoYG94mikozDua9V1ok5-7M>

<https://refugees.org/uscri-statement-calling-for-an-independent-united-nations-investigation-into-the-disappearance-of-refugees-from-the-tigray-region-of-ethiopia/>

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<https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210210-ethiopian-red-cross-says-80-percent-of-tigray-cut-off-from-aid>

<https://www.ifrcnewsroom.org/story/en/316/after-visiting-tigray-ifrc-president-calls-for-increased-humanitarian-response/2466>

<https://www.unfpa.org/news/pregnant-women-struggle-find-support-stability-after-displacement-tigray-region-ethiopia>

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 83 - 12 February 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation (as confirmed per 11 February)

- Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi from China speaks by phone to Ethiopia Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonen on humanitarian assistance to Tigray.
- Ambassador Teferi Meles sent a letter to thank for contributions to “strengthen defence forces” received from supporters in the UK and Ireland “on the direction of church representatives”.
- The letter states: “Based on the direction you set and in consultation with your representative, we (..) inform you that we have secretly transferred Birr 25 million to the bank account of the Ministry of Defence.”
- The LA Times has published an account of a rape survivor (27y) in Tigray. The victim was forced into a shed by 5 Eritrean soldiers. She recognised them due to their accent. The story was corroborated by a counselor at a local rehabilitation centre.
- Over the course of the next two weeks, in early January, she was gang raped by scores of soldiers. One day involved 15 men repeatedly raping her for eight hours, leading to fractures in her spine and pelvis.
- She escaped on January 23rd, and has not had any contact with her sister (24y), who was taken at the same time as she was.
- LA Times also published a story about Lucy Kassa, the journalist whose house was ransacked on Monday.
- She says that 3 armed men barged into her Addis Ababa home, looking for the story about the gang rape. They took her laptop, pictures from a source in Adigrat, and a flashdrive. The men also threatened to kill her before they left.
- A therapist who was treating the rape victim, which the journalist had interviewed, also called her saying to have been threatened.
- According to a Tigrayan student in Europe who has had contact with her family, Ethiopian soldiers have arrived in her village with food, but are withholding it from anyone who is suspected of being a TPLF sympathiser. According to AP who reported the story, other such accounts exist.
- Human Rights Watch has called for a UN inquiry on violations by the parties involved in the conflict.
- HRW has accused Ethiopia of shelling civilian areas indiscriminately at the beginning of the conflict. Laetitia Bader HRW Horn of Africa director has said “At the war’s start, Ethiopian federal forces fired artillery into Tigray’s urban areas in an apparently indiscriminate manner that was bound to cause civilian casualties and property damage.”
- HRW has interviewed 37 civilian witnesses and 9 journalists. Additionally they have used satellite images and pictures to corroborate the accounts: “witnesses described to HRW a pattern of artillery attacks by Ethiopian federal forces before they captured Humera, Shire, and Mekelle in November. In each of these attacks the Tigrayan special forces appeared to have withdrawn, while in Humera local militias lacked a significant presence to defend the town.”
- HRW found that: “many of the artillery attacks did not appear aimed at specific military targets but struck generalized populated areas. (..) These attacks caused civilian deaths and injuries; damaged

homes, businesses, and infrastructure; struck near schools; disrupted medical services; and prompted thousands of civilians to flee.”

- French Newspaper Liberation has published accounts of the massacre in Aksum. A witness states that he buried between 300 and 400 people killed at the massacre of 28/29 November.
- Sudan and Ethiopia have again clashed on their border, fighting for disputed territory. A Sudanese military official has said that they have taken (back) 50 thousand hectares from Ethiopia.

Ethiopian Human Rights Commission

- The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) released a report on the human rights situation in Tigray.
- It noted that “Local structures such as police and health facilities where victims of sexual violence would normally turn to report such crimes are no longer in place. Hence, there is a possibility that the actual number of cases might be higher and more widespread than the reported cases.” A 108 cases of rape were reported in the last two months in Mekelle.
- The Commission noted that the legal status and “administrative authority” in West Tigray was causing insecurity for civilians living in those areas.
- The EHRC reported that abandoned mines and hand grenades were causing injuries to children and found that following the arrest of Nega on January 8th, security forces shot in the air in celebration, causing stray bullets to injure people and the death of a 4 year old child.
- It says it is still investigating the full extent of the casualties and will report on that in a future report.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 11 February)

- The European Parliament debated the issue of Tigray during the plenary session on Thursday.
- Hungarian György Hölvényi (EPP) stated: “Peace is not a domestic issue, the Tigray conflict puts at risk the entire region's stability, (...) we must end the conflict as soon as possible, otherwise the conflict could spread to other countries and set off more migration to Europe.”
- German Green MEP Erik Marquardt asks: “What is the role of Eritrea? The Ethiopian PM gave Eritrea money to commit crimes, who is responsible for these crimes? How can people responsible be brought to justice? How can we ensure humanitarian aid is reaching those in need? That the press can get in? The important question is, if the EU is going to be successful, then we need to coordinate the approach with member states.”
- German Social Democrat Norbert Neuser states: “As the EU, we have expressed a clear position, we suspend budget support. We are calling for unlimited access for humanitarian aid and assistance to Tigray and the 20,000 Eritrean refugees who disappeared, we should understand what happened to them. Eritrea should withdraw its troops.”
- Dutch MP Martijn Van Helvert asks the Dutch Foreign Minister whether she will support unimpeded humanitarian access and the immediate unconditional withdrawal of Eritrea from Ethiopia.
- The EU is calling on “the prevention of refoulement or forced return targeting Eritrean refugees. It has underlined that all civilians in search of assistance, safety, and security in Tigray should be safe and free to move to other Ethiopian regions or towards neighbouring countries.”

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 84 - 15 February 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 14 February)

- The UAE armed forces are quietly leaving the Assab base in Eritrea. They have been in Assab since 2015. The UAE has come to a decision to withdraw from the conflict in Yemen where it was involved. Eritrean mercenaries were also involved in Yemen.
- The departure of UAE from Eritrea will have consequences for the conflict in Tigray where the UAE was involved providing assistance to the Ethiopian allied forces with drone attacks carried out against Tigray regional forces on Tigray territory. The drone was stationed in Assab.
- Reported that Ethiopia is paying the Eritrean troops in Tigray. Report that Eritrean troops have between 10.000 - 20.000 birr in their pockets (200-400 €, which is a big amount as Eritrean national service troops will receive only around 3 USD a month in their pocket (depending on the calculation).
- Reports of fierce fighting between ENDF allied and Tigray regional forces around Samre and TDF claims that the ENDF's 32 division was destroyed. Samre is in the South-East of Mekelle.
- The Eritrean army has increased its presence in Wukro; they have opened a camp in the Wukro Lodge. During the protests in Wukro on Wednesday 18 youth were killed by Eritrean soldiers.
- Reported by phone that 20 youth were executed in Adwa and 10 in Shire during the protests during the last days. Other sources from within Tigray confirm similar reports and numbers by phone.
- In Adigrat famine and lack of medicine is causing people to die, reported by phone.
- Report that the Debre Damo monastery is destroyed. After it had been bombed, reportedly by Eritrean troops, Eritrean troops climbed onto the 6th century monastery and looted old manuscripts and treasures. The houses and buildings on top of the flat mountain are completely destroyed.
- Tigray's elected but ousted regional state President Dr. Debretsion Gebremichael made a statement on the occasion of the 46th anniversary of the beginning of the struggle of the people of Tigray.
- In his statement, the ousted president called all Tigrayan youth to join the struggle and fight for Tigray's self determination.
- In an audio recording, a member of the leadership of the Tigray Independence Party (TIP) made a statement on the occasion of the 46th anniversary calling on all Tigrayan youth to fight for freedom and independence.
- Reported that some parents in Tigray are shaving their daughters hair off and dressing them as boys to protect them from being raped.
- The Ethiopian minister for women, Filsan Abdullahi, has confirmed that there are cases of rape in Tigray. A task force deployed to the region confirmed it. The taskforce has however only been able to operate in and around Mekelle, so the number of rape cases will rise.
- Video of Ethiopian/Eritrean soldiers beating civilians laying on the street:
<https://twitter.com/i/status/1360917891068162050>
- Videos appear of Eritrean soldiers looting, vandalising and entering houses of citizens in Tigray.

- A horrific picture circulates on the internet of a doctor of the Adwa clinic who is held captive by soldiers. The pictures are degrading and the doctor looks famined and in a bad state.
- Reported that metallic chain tanks were used on roads in Tigray intentionally to destroy asphalt roads. The asphalt road from Axum to Adwa is destroyed due to chain tanks driven on them.
- A UNICEF team has traveled to Tigray and has found an “incomplete but troubling picture” of the situation of Children in Tigray and states: “children are in acute need of protection and assistance”.
- The UNICEF team visited Shire, the first UN mission there since the conflict began, and found that the town (population of 170 thousand), is hosting 50 thousand IDPs. Those are sheltering in schools.
- UNICEF and its partners have also found severe malnutrition.

reported situation in the Horn Region (as confirmed per 14 February)

- Turkish foreign minister states that Ethiopia’s foreign minister Demeke Mekonnen will pay a two-day visit to Turkey starting on Monday.
- The road from Gallabat to Metma, which connects Sudan and Ethiopia, has been closed by Sudan.
- Sudan’s foreign ministry said Ethiopia forces crossed the border into Sudanese territory in an act of “aggression”.
- “Ethiopia’s trespass into Sudanese land is an unfortunate and unacceptable escalation, which could have dangerous repercussions on security and stability in the region,” the ministry said in a statement.
- General Yasir al-Atta, a member of the Sovereignty Council visited the border region between Sudan and Ethiopia. In a speech to the troops, the General said that the government intends to end the “abandonment of the Sudanese territory” and establish a permanent military base on the “international border”.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 14 February)

- UK states: “We have assessed the appropriateness of UKAid programmes in Ethiopia in light of the developments of the Tigray conflict and are carefully considering our delivery model. We will continue to provide £37.8m of funding to non-governmental partners, to ensure we continue using ODA to alleviate the humanitarian situation and poverty.”
- Foreign Minister of Germany Heiko Maas and his counterpart Haavisto had a good discussion after Haavisto’s visit to the region. The German ministry of Foreign Affairs has said that action in the coming weeks is critical to avoid all out famine in Tigray.
- Ethiopia has hired a lobbying firm for outreach to Congress and the Joe Biden administration and reportedly signed a \$35,000-per-month contract with DC-based law firm Venable on Feb. 1. It is reported that the contract is for an initial three months but can be extended. The lobby activity has been filed with the US Justice Department.
- In an editorial, the Financial Times states that “Some Tigrayans smell a plot to divide their region between Eritrea and Amhara. The government should allay those fears by insisting that armed forces from both Eritrea and Amhara withdraw. Disputes over land between Tigray and Amhara should be resolved through a boundary commission.”

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 85 - 16 February 2021

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Reported war situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 15 February)

- Elfinesh Nigussie, Interim head of communication affairs of Tigray, admitted to @VOATigrigna the presence of Eritrean and Amhara forces in Tigray and how both forces hinder the distribution of aid by looting during the transportation of aid.
- Elfinesh also urged that Eritrean and Amhara forces should leave the Tigray region immediately.
- Further confirmations that the 6th century Monastery of Debre Damo was bombarded by artillery. One monk was killed and twelve buildings destroyed.
- Following the bombardment of Debre Damo, six Eritrean soldiers climbed up the 80ft rift onto the plateau and searched the sacred monastery and its buildings.
- Alessandro Bausi, an expert in Ethiopic texts and manuscripts at Hamburg University, says that multiple sources were informing him that key sites were being targeted and "irreplaceable" artefacts were destroyed or pillaged. There are 120 Rock Hewn churches in Tigray, going back to the 3rd century.
- Weyni Abraha, from the Human rights group Yikono, says that rape is part of a strategy to break the people of Tigray. It is a weapon of war: "Many women were raped in Mekelle. This is being done purposely to break the morale of the people, threaten them and make them give up the fight."
- The head of the ENDF has denied the claims of rape to the BBC and the interim government has said that the numbers are grossly exaggerated.
- More incidences of rape are reported in Tigray. Some were perpetrated on underage children. According to a doctor, 4 cases involved 10 year olds.
- According to sources, there has been an increase in fighting recently. Fighting near Adigrat has been intensifying.
- In an internal meeting conducted by the ENDF 3 days ago, it was discussed that Tigray regional forces is deploying thousands of fighters in every front and simultaneous battles are increasing.
- The ENDF meeting reportedly discussed that, if it is to maintain its position in Tigray, ENDF needs additional troops from the Federal Ethiopian Government.
- Two Antonov planes have landed at Mekelle to bring reinforcements of ENDF.
- ENDF have started digging trenches around Mekelle to defend themselves from attacks by Tigray regional forces. Since the last three days, they are digging the trenches using dozers and excavators at night. It is observed that ENDF is changing from an offensive to a defensive strategy.
- Tensions are also running high in Mekelle with concerns that this may result in more fighting or violence.
- Fighting was also reported in Hawzen, North West of Wukro and ENDF forces retreated back to Feleg Daero and Agulia areas, North of Mekelle.

- After heavy fighting between ENDF allied and Tigray regional forces for the last days, Smare, Gijet and Maykinetal (40km from Adwa) have been taken back by Tigray forces. The battle lasted four days.
- According to locals in Zufan (Maykinetal), 2000 Eritreans were killed in the battle. This has been confirmed by other sources.
- The area of the Wer'i river between Tembien and Naidir Adet is taken over by the Tigray regional forces.
- Fighting has been taking place around Gijet, South East of Mekelle. According to sources, Tigrayan forces are in control of the town.
- Reported that in the Gijet front, female soldiers have been deployed by ENDF.
- Gebre Gebrestadik, spokesperson of Tigray regional forces, said to DW that in the fight against ENDF's 32 division on 14/02/2021 in a place between Yechila and Gijet, 1579 soldiers were killed, 500 injured and 104 captured.
- Many senior officers of ENDF, including L.Col. Ababu, senior commander of the division, has been killed and several military equipments were burnt and captured, said the spokesperson.
- Abraha Desta, Interim head of social and labor affairs of Tigray states on facebook that his support to the provisional administration in Mekelle is conditional.
- Abraha Desta said: "I am not part of the interim government by my political choice and I do not support the federal government or oppose the TPLF either. I am part of the interim government on a humanitarian basis."
- He added that if one square meter of land is taken from Tigray, I will voluntarily resign from my position. It is not just about resigning, I will publicly oppose the federal government and will fight to get my land back.
- New pictures, from the 21st of January, show destroyed vehicles, including tanks, outside of Guya.
- A video shows that the city administration office in Mekelle has been ransacked, with many valuable stolen and removed.
- According to a source, during a protest in Wukro, 18 people were killed by Eritrean soldiers. Another source provided the information that 20 more had been executed in Adwa and 10 in Shire.
- The Eritrean army has been increasing its presence in Wukro.

Reported situation in the Horn Region (as confirmed per 15 February)

- Ethiopia and Sudan are clashing on the border again.
- The Sudanese foreign ministry has condemned "Ethiopian aggression" and encroachment onto Sudanese territory. The Ministry also warned that continued aggression could have a dangerous impact on the security and stability of the region.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 15 February)

- The Foreign minister of Egypt has said that the GERD dam negotiations did "not produce anything tangible, nor produce the desired results".

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 86 - 17 February 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 16 February)

- Devex has reported on the conditions that many raped women from Tigray find themselves in after arriving in camps in Sudan. Many of the women have asked to abort the pregnancy, however due to Sudanese legislation, this has been made difficult.
- Sudan allows abortion for 90 days after the start of the pregnancy, but only if a police report has been submitted and a judge determined that it occurred.
- These obstacles have led many to seek illegal abortions, which are significantly more dangerous for the health of these woman.
- Similarly, according to Devex, there is a lot of trauma with the refugees in Sudan.
- According to people in Mekelle, there is a lot of military activity taking place in the city. The details are not known, however there have been multiple reports of ENDF soldiers digging trenches in and around the city. Similarly there has been an increase in military arial activity above the city.
- Electricity interruptions have also been taking place in the city and power outing throughout Tigray.
- Reports of bombing of civilians near Gijet and Samre by ENDF warplanes. Civilian casualties reported.
- Reported that one ENDF brigade of the 11th division was destroyed in the Gijet battle where the 32 division was annihilated.
- A video footage of dead soldiers in ENDF uniform in a battle in Tigray circulates in social media.
- There was an alleged air raid in Samre, phones there have been disconnected.
- Reported fighting was taking place near Shire today.
- Report of fighting today near Wajirat.
- The TPLF claims to have shot down a couple of Ethiopian warplanes.
- According to the Sudanese military sources, Eritrea is assembling soldiers on its border.
- In a phone interview with Tigray Media House, Getachaw Reda, TPLF's executive member, said that more than a hundred thousand armed soldiers have been killed in the war in Tigray.
- "The war in Tigray is mainly led by Eritrean Generals and Ethioian generals are only acting as spokesman of the Eritrean forces," Getachaw added.

Reported situation in the Horn Region (as confirmed per 16 February)

- The Ethiopian Minister of Foreign ministry spokesperson has said that Ethiopia welcomes the South Sudanese offer to mediate between Sudan and Ethiopia. He added that Ethiopia was always willing to negotiate and settle issues peacefully.
- Following the attack on Lucy Kassa, an Ethiopian government linked twitter account, dismissed the attack by stating that she was not officially registered as a journalist in Ethiopia.

- Al Jazeera, who is covering this, says that there have been claims by journalists that “the government is employing a coordinated strategy to oppress and undermine journalists through social media, state media and the Ethiopian diaspora”. However it could not verify this.
- The Committee to Protect Journalists has condemned these attacks and demanded an independent investigation into these incidents.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 16 February)

- The British Minister for Africa has urged Eritrean troops to immediately withdraw from Tigray. He is also concerned about the recent Ethiopian Human Rights Commission report.
- In the Hoover Institution Series “Battleground with a H. R McMaster”, a former National Security advisor to President Trump, President Paul Kagame of Rwanda has called on the United Nations Security Council to act on Tigray.
- President Kagame said that the situation in Tigray was very concerning, and the number of deaths reported was too high to let Ethiopia and the African Union handle the situation alone.
- President Kagame named the following reasons why the UN should intervene in Tigray.
 - the presence of Eritrean troops in Tigray turns the conflict into an international and civil one.
 - Two refugee camps have been destroyed and between 15 and 20 thousands Eritrean refugees in Tigray have gone missing. Eritrean troops have been implicated in these crimes. This gives the UNSC the right to act on the issue.
 - Tigray is being confronted with a potential famine, where 2.3 million people need urgent access to supplies. Ethiopian troops are making access difficult and restricting access to water and aid, including that of the UN.
 - More than 2 million people are now internally displaced. This is putting a further strain on other crises such as the locust infestation and Covid-19. There is high food insecurity, and the reticence of the Ethiopian government to ask for help will lead to a disastrous situation in Tigray.
 - the UN and other organisations are reporting serious violations of the Geneva Conventions and other International Humanitarian Law. Some reports are also suggesting acts that could constitute ethnic cleansing.
 - Ethiopia is entirely focused on its fight in Tigray, leading to the weakening of regional stability as Ethiopia retreats from its peacekeeping obligations. It has withdrawn soldiers from Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan. Furthermore recent months have seen increasing tensions between Somalia and Kenya, and around the GERD dam.
 - Sudan itself is in the middle of a precarious political transition which could be destabilized. This is creating a dangerously unstable situation that terrorist organisations such as Al Shabaab could exploit.
- The President concluded that when a state is not able to stop atrocities on its territory, such as genocide, the UN has a duty to intervene.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 87 - 18 February 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 17 February)

- TPLF Spokesperson, Getachew Reda states that “The war in Tigray is mainly spearheaded by Eritrean army generals. Ethiopian chief of general staff, General Birhanu Jula as well as Northern commander General Belay Seyoum are now practically the army spokesperson of the Eritrean army.”
- Getachew Reda says that “Notable, Eritrean Generals such as Sumon Equbu (nickname Riesi Mirak) and Hadush Efreim are leading the war and they are usually heard via intercepted military radio communications, undermining the orders of the Ethiopian army commanders.”
- Getachew said he “firmly believe in the continuity and unity of Ethiopia as a nation.”
- Getachew reflected that because of the “magnificent pain” suffered by the people of Tigray, many Tigrayans “will now have a hard time to regard Ethiopia as their own nation (country).”
- Getachew stated that “It's only the people of Tigray who have the right to decide whether to continue being part of Ethiopia or not. For now, the focus of the resistance is to remove the invaders and bring the region into normalcy, once that is achieved, the people of Tigray will be given the chance to decide its future.”
- Getachew stated that “We understand the destiny of our people is not dependent on the position that foreign powers take. We are paying tremendous sacrifice to defend our dignity, our democratic and human rights, for this purpose thousands of Tigrayan youth are joining the armed struggle.”
- Getachew stated he recently learned that Abiy's government is referring to TPLF as ‘Junta’: “We learned this from the prisoners of war, that they were sent to capture the weak fugitives of ‘Junta’; a new nickname the government is using to refer to TPLF leaders.”
- Getachew states that ENDF and Eritrean soldiers are not told the truth before going to battle. They do not know “that they are engaging with well armed opposition forces.”
- Getachew stated: “We do not have anything negative against these soldiers, as they are deceived to take part in this war. We see them dying in thousands in every fight, we have pity for that. When they are captured we don't have the moral courage to do any harm to them, since most of them are misled and deceived, they had no clue what they were getting into.”
- Getachew states that PM Abiy's weapon is the total communication blockade in Tigray, which helped him to disseminate a false narrative about the war being over, contrary to the facts on the ground.
- President Isayas from Eritrea sets out in a speech to the nation that he does not support the Ethiopian Constitution. He states PM Abiy has some good ideas but some are too hasty to implement.
- President Isayas states that federalism does not work and that Ethiopia would break down. He says he advised president Meles against the Constitution in 1994. He is now advising PM Abiy.
- According to President Isayas the current conflict is triggered by the “Janda” of the TPLF. “Janda” is a tigrinya word for ‘Junta’.
- President Isayas said he did not support the GERD Dam on the Nile: it is not a priority among many regional priorities. In fact he advised to postpone the agenda in 1993. Meles continued pursuing his perspective, despite Isayas' advice. The Dam is not the agenda of Ethiopia but of foreign powers.

- Isayas said that foreign powers have been behind the TPLF government for decades and behind the defamation of Eritrea and that this is a continuation of their policy.
- The Eritrean President stated that the guerilla fighting being undertaken by the remaining leaders of TPLF is worrying: they want to create a war of attrition and then launch a counter offensive and this may take a long time.
- The Tigray interim administration released a statement asking people not to give cover to the “dispersed remnants” of TPLF.
- There were fireworks today in Mekelle as youth in the city celebrated TPLF's 46th anniversary, which is tomorrow on the 18th of February and is usually a large national celebration.
- The Ethiopian government has publicly announced power outages across Tigray region, blaming TPLF. Others suggest it is to prevent celebration of the TPLF 46th anniversary.
- One of the leaders of the TPLF in the battle areas denied the allegations that it was responsible for power outages, stating “it is keenly interested to have good phone communication which is difficult without power. TPLF thinks the ability of the Tigrayan people to support the struggle increases with infrastructural services.”
- Reported that Prosperity Party leaders in Mekelle have been told by HQ to leave Mekelle.
- Nebiyu Sihul, has been removed from his position as head of Tigray Prosperity Party and is now heading the party's members empowerment follow up bureau, based in Addis Ababa.

Reported situation in the Horn Region (as confirmed per 17 February)

- Bekele Gerba, secretary general of the Oromo Federalist Congress, who has been on hunger strike, has been transported to a hospital for treatment.
- The family of Bekele Gerba, says that he was “abducted” during transport and forced to go to a military hospital instead of a private one, and was returned to prison without treatment.
- Ethiopia welcomes Turkish mediation if it is offered. The Ethiopian Foreign Ministry spokesperson said that close Turkish ties to both Ethiopia and Sudan would allow it to solve the conflict peacefully.
- Sudan has summoned its ambassador to Ethiopia for consultation. This comes following Sudanese accusations that Ethiopian troops crossed its border.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 17 February)

- Jutta Urpilainen, EU commissioner for international partnerships, points to the importance of the EU, IMF, World Bank, UK, US, and Canada indicating to PM Abiy that without full humanitarian access to Tigray, financial support for the government will not be available.
- The Tigray diaspora in Washington D.C held a demonstration as Ethiopian negotiators arrived at the World Bank to request debt relief. The protesters highlighted that finances are diverted to war and genocidal crimes committed in Tigray.
- Deutsche Welle reported that Germany's aid commitment to Ethiopia is 350 million and this is a critical support to the Ethiopian government if it is continued.
- Dutch PM Mark Rutte spoke with PM Abiy expressing concerns about the human rights situation in Tigray and called for a peaceful solution to the conflict and unrestricted access for humanitarian aid.
- Reported that the Arab League stands with Sudan and its sovereignty in its crisis with Ethiopia.
- The Centre for Strategic International Studies organises a webinar “Restoring Humanitarian Access in Ethiopia” on Monday, February 22, 2021 9:00 am - 9:45 am. The purpose is to discuss the challenges to humanitarian access in Ethiopia and a pathway forward. Life questions can be asked [here](#).

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 88 - 19 February 2021

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Reported war situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 18 February)

- Hunalem Ashagre, the local head of the Prosperity Party, has said that the invasion in Tigray has cost 1.5 billion ETB (31 million €) in damaged and looted property.
- In this gesture of solidarity, PM Abiy has donated his one month salary, 200,000 birr (4.157€) from the sale of the Medemer book and three water tanker trucks through the Office of the Prime Minister. He calls upon all to join the #RebuildTigray solidarity initiative.
- PM Abiy Ahmed attended a virtual meeting with the Tigray provisional government to agree to mobilise support for the Tigray Region in national solidarity with our people, as the region rebuilds.
- It is to be recalled that hundreds of EFFORT and REST vehicles as well as property was stolen and destroyed from factories, shops, universities and citizens by Ethiopian and Eritrean forces.
- A letter is posted at Ayder Referral Hospital in Mekelle stating that patients who were beneficiaries of community-based health insurance, free and other scheme users are no longer considered for health services, if they are not able to pay.
- Previously patients who are unable to pay were able to get health services for free when they provided a support letter from their respective administration. At this critical time, the free health services are stopped for people who are not able to pay.
- Heavy fighting has been reported around Mekelle. This follows several reports of intensifying activity around the city. Earlier this week, trenches and barricades were reportedly being set up on the outskirts of the city ENDF soldiers.
- Antonov airplanes were seen flying over Mekelle.
- There have been power interruptions throughout the day throughout Tigray.
- Mekelle and Adigrat celebrated Lekatit 11 (TPLF anniversary and national celebration) with the national colours of red and yellow balloons as well as flags around the city.
- The UNHCR has said that it has re-established a regular presence in the two southern refugee camps, Mai Ayni and Adi Harush. It is strengthening protection and registration services in both camps.
- UNHCR and its partners are planning the relocations of refugees from both Shimbela and Hitsats refugee camps. Both sites were closer earlier in the month by the Ethiopian government.
- According to the UN 5 thousand refugees have already arrived in Mai Ayni and Adi Harush, with an estimated 15 thousand now dispersed or missing.
- The UNHCR reports 7 IDP sites in Mekelle, with an estimated 52 thousand IDPs present.
- The AP has reported on the massacre which occurred in Aksum. It reports that over 800 people were killed in the massacre at the church Our Mary of Zion, committed by Eritrean soldiers.
- A church deacon interviewed by AP said that he estimated that thousands had been killed in the city.
- The AP source states that bodies were left in the streets, with hyenas feeding on the dead overnight.
- According to the report, indiscriminate shooting continued for days in Aksum.

- Some bodies were left for days before anyone attended to them. One university lecturer recalled “I saw a horse cart carrying around 20 bodies to the church, but Eritrean soldiers stopped them and told people to throw them back on the street.” Many were buried in mass graves.
- Another person interviewed by AP said that federal police and forces were not doing anything to stop the massacres.
- When asked federal forces said orders came from above to not intervene. “They said: ‘What can we do? This shouldn’t have happened from the beginning. This is from above.’”
- Thousands of displaced people had sought shelter in the church. Soldiers then entered the church of Our Mary of Zion and “cornering and dragging out worshippers and shooting at those who fled.” The deacon was able to flee, stumbling over dead bodies as they went along.
- The killings themselves are still going on when the interview took place last week. The deacon said that he buried 3 more people the morning of the interview.
- The deacon also said that in rural areas the situation is much worse. He believes thousands more have been killed in villages surrounding the city.
- Videos appear from Adwa town where Ethiopian soldiers are collecting youths and at same time shooting and killing some of them. The videos show bodies laying in the corners of the street and Ethiopian soldiers ordering the young boys to move the body from the road to the side.

Reported situation in the Horn Region (as confirmed per 18 February)

- According to the Daily News Egypt, The Prime Minister of Sudan, Hamdok, has requested the involvement of the African Union, the European Union, the United States, and the United Nations to help move the negotiations regarding the GERD dam forwards.
- Saudi Arabia has offered to mediate the GERD negotiations. The offer was made on Tuesday, during a meeting between the Saudi minister for African Affairs and senior Sudanese officials, including the Prime minister.
- Ethiopia has accused Sudan dismantling local institutions in the disputed territory. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also accuses Sudan of invading Ethiopia at a time when it was occupied elsewhere.
- AP concluded after its own investigation, that the UAE was withdrawing from its Assab base in Eritrea. Satellite pictures that AP analyzed showed that barracks and other buildings were being dismantled. They have also found records of ships going back and forth between Assab and the UAE.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 18 February)

- Biden Mulls over the appointment of a Special Envoy for Horn of Africa, which, “ if created, would bring more diplomatic firepower to the brewing crisis in Ethiopia.”
- The EU Development Commissioner has said that the bloc needs to plan carefully with regards to Ethiopia. The new budget is coming into force soon. The Commissioner said that the EU and its Member States need to have a broader strategy regarding Ethiopia, and an idea of what to do with the financial support to Ethiopia.
- USAid mission director Sean Jones has completed a tour in Tigray this week. The visit addressed humanitarian and governance challenges associated with conflict to “identify solutions for rapidly scaling up assistance to reach as many communities as possible.”
- Tigrayans also celebrated Lekatit 11 around the world with diaspora holding an event via Zoom. The Tigray government was represented through Ambassador Berhan Meskel.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 89 - 22 February 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 21 February)

- A witness has reported that on 4 November 2020 Eritrean soldiers already entered into the town of Gerhusernay, near the Ethiopia-Eritrea border, where it started killing civilians.
- The attack by Eritrean troops happened in the night. Therefore, it would appear to have been part of a pre-planned attack. The official reading by the Ethiopian Government is that it started a law and order Operation after Tigray regional troops attacked the Northern Command on 4 November 2020.
- A spokesperson close to the Tigray regional government, which is now in hiding, gave a different reading of what had transpired. In this version, the war in Tigray effectively started on November 3, 2020. That day, Addis Ababa sent a cargo plane with special forces to Mekelle, under the pretext of transporting bank notes.
- According to the Tigray regional government, they had intelligence that the special forces were instructed to arrest the Tigray state government leaders, meeting in a hotel in Mekelle.
- The tensions reportedly occurred in the context of the federal government seeking to redeploy the Northern Command of the Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF), stationed in Tigray.
- The Tigray regional state government opposed redeployment of the Northern Command because the constitutional power of PM Abiy had ended on October 5 2020 and, as elections had been postponed, due to the Covid-19 crisis, the Prime Minister was heading a care-taker government.
- The attempted arrest of the members of the Tigray government was foiled and the regional government sought to gain control over the Northern Command of Ethiopian government forces.
- Eritrean Minister of Information, Yemane Meskel, gave his own version on the start of the war in a tweet on 18/2: "The nefarious intent & scope of the massive, "pre-emptive", military attacks that the TPLF clique unleashed on Ethiopia's Northern command in November is downplayed by international media outlets, "pundits" & apologists of the cabal."
- The government of Tigray has issued a roadmap to a peaceful resolution of the war in Tigray, reiterating that it was forced into a war and that it is still committed to a peaceful resolution to the war, the government put 8 preconditions to the resolution:
 1. Immediate withdrawal of invading Eritrean (PFDJ) forces from Tigray and confirming their withdrawal by nonpartisan international organizations.
 2. Respecting the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Tigray with an immediate withdrawal of all invading forces from South, West, North and Eastern Tigray (Amhara and Eritrean forces).
 3. Removing the "interim Administration" and reinstating the elected government.
 4. Investigating the war crimes committed in Tigray by nonpartisan international organizations.
 5. Unhindered humanitarian access throughout Tigray and delivering aid to the needy 4.5 million Tigrayans and allowing and opening up Tigray to Journalists and human rights organizations.
 6. Inventory and auditing, returning and compensating of the looted, destroyed and dysfunctional Tigrayan assets (private, government and public assets).
 7. Releasing all political prisoners and other Tigrayans.
 8. Negotiations to be mediated by nonpartisan international organizations.

- The European Council will meet Monday 22/2 to hear the report of Pekka Haavisto. Ahead of the meeting the Eritrean government sent out a communication from its '03' propaganda division to target EU leaders and officials with a message that it should not be "scapegoated" for the situation in Tigray.
- The letter by the Eritrean PFDJ representative reads: "We all have heard the interview of our President Isayas Afwerki on 17/02/2021. And today we have an urgent task to campaign on social media."
- The social media war saw others respond to the campaign stating that the issue at hand is not one of "scapegoating" but rather seeking accountability for the actions of Eritrean troops in Tigray.
- Flights to Mekelle are still postponed. The city is surrounded and Ethiopian allied troops have been digging trenches South of the city.
- Former Fenkil leader Yemane Niguse has been reportedly killed in Hiwane, South of Mekelle today with his guards. Fenkil is a youth movement established against the TPLF.
- Announced on DW, Tigray regional forces spokesperson said that an Eritrean division along with ENDF soldiers are marching towards Tekeze hydropower dam with the intention to destroy it.
- Reported that 156 Eritreans were arrested in the last three months suspected of disturbing and displacing residents of various condominiums in Addis Ababa.
- Tigray Media House shows a video of men and women in ENDF uniforms captured in a town near Samre. Captive soldiers were later released by Tigray regional forces and walked to Mekelle barefoot.
- A video footage shows a wallet of an Eritrean soldier killed at the fighting in Idagahamus. A letter was found in his wallet sent from Saron to Ibrahim. In the letter she is asking him to defect and hide somewhere as much as possible and to not participate in the war in a Tigray.
- Satellite pictures show regular fires in Mai Kaidra over the course of last month.

Reported situation in the Horn Region (as confirmed per 21 February)

- The Sudanese government has strongly rejected accusations that its military component is serving the interest of a third country and alluded to the involvement of the Eritrean troops in the ongoing border dispute with Ethiopia.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 21 February)

- The United Nations says Ethiopia's embattled Tigray region faces a "very critical" malnutrition situation as vast rural areas where many people fled during three months of fighting remain out of reach of aid.
- The U.N. humanitarian agency also said that Ethiopian defense forces continue to occupy a hospital in the town of Abi Adi, "preventing up to 500,000 people from accessing health services" in a region where the health system has largely collapsed under looting and artillery fire.
- "The needs are tremendous, but we cannot pretend that we do not see or hear what is unfolding," Ethiopian President Sahle-Work Zewde said in a statement after visiting the Tigray capital, Mekelle. She also noted that "significant delays that remain in reaching people in need".
- The Irish minister of Foreign Affairs, Simon Coveney, has said that they would keep on bringing the issue of Tigray, Ethiopia, and Eritrea up in the United Nations Security Council and in the EU.
- USCIRF, a US government created commission, has said that it is deeply concerned by the attacks on religious sites in Tigray. They call for a thorough investigation and the protection of religious sites.
- The ICRC director of operations has said that he was concerned about the food situation in Tigray and the lack of adequate healthcare facilities.

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<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/2/20/un-says-malnutrition-very-critical-in-ethiopias-tigray>

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 90 - 23 February 2021

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Reported war situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 22 February)

- President of the International Federation of the Red Cross, Francesco Rocco, speaks in an interview of the devastation he saw during his visit to Tigray a week ago, which was pale in comparison to anything he had seen in his professional capacity.
- Rocco said he was still “overwhelmed by the level of emotion and impact the visit had on him”, and stated that “the needs are enormous.” People have no food, no water, no medicine or drugs.
- Rocco found that 90-95% of the health facilities are not working and was especially struck by the “systematic aggression to the health facilities.” He had heard reports of “looting of the facilities in the rural areas health posts.”
- Rocco expressed concern for the aid workers: “The situation on the ground is very volatile and you have to be very careful.” He said “Ethiopian Red Cross volunteers are paying a bloody price, trying to reach rural areas.” and emphasised there is still fighting and no cease-fire in Tigray.
- Rocco spoke with emotion about the frustration that there is no clearance for the humanitarian flights of the Red Cross: “We are ready. We have loaded our cargos. But we can not send medicine, drugs and food.” He said “elderly and children are in desperate need of food.”
- Rocco stated Red Cross volunteers were in need of psycho-social support as frustration was growing that they had nothing to distribute in such a devastating situation.
- Asked why the Red Cross could not distribute when the Ethiopian government said it was, Rocco stated: “Maybe the Ethiopians have an invisible channel to provide aid, a different channel than we are using; I don’t want to blame anyone but as a reality unfortunately, hospitals are empty, there is no medicine, drugs and food.”
- Rocco stated that the 200.000 IDPs in Mekelle and towns were supported by local communities. He asked attention for the children living alone in camps as they had been separated from their families during the fighting.
- The most recent UN situation report on Tigray says that despite progress, the “humanitarian response remains drastically inadequate compared to the sheer magnitude of needs across the region.” The food situation in Tigray has become very critical.
- Reports of ethnic targeting of Tigrayans in UN peacekeeping forces in Juba, South Sudan. Pictures show men that have been beaten up, reportedly after they refused to go back to Ethiopia.
- Reportedly 39 of ethnic Tigrayan Ethiopian peacekeepers were forced to the airport to transport them back to Ethiopia, whilst 15 were sheltered by the UNHCR. Similar forcible return from AMISOM in Somalia was reported among fears that the returnees may face torture and execution.
- A video footage shared by the Tigray Media House shows a summary execution of male civilians by Ethiopian forces in Southern Tigray.
- About three days ago there was a massacre of more than 100 civilians in the area of Gijet, in the village Khisret, which happened after the massive TDF counter-offensive. A short film clip shows dead bodies of youth that have been massacred and women in shock. The perpetrators were identified as Ethiopian government soldiers.

- DW reported from Tigray that 160 civilians were executed in Chelena Bora district, Southern Tigray by Ethiopian forces on Jan 8.
- Fear is expressed that Eritrean and ENDF forces may destroy the Tekeze hydropower dam. This would keep the region without electricity and in the dark for a long period of time.

Reported situation in the Horn Region (as confirmed per 22 February)

- FANA, the Ethiopian government broadcaster, reported that the chief of the Ethiopian army is in the UAE for a visit to the crown prince and other government officials.
- According to sources, the Sembel Hospital in Asmara has been closed since April 2020. Supposedly it was due to Covid-19. The hospital is privately operated by the TPLF. It is apparently being used to service the international community.
- This leaves two hospitals open to the public in Eritrea: Halibet hospital (a military hospital that provides services to civilians) and Orotta hospital.
- Sudan owns the land where Ethiopia built the GERD, claims former negotiator Dr. Ahmed Al-Mufti. He told the Saudi-owned *Alarabiya* that his country granted the land to Ethiopia in 1902 on the condition that Addis Ababa would not establish any water infrastructure without Khartoum's approval.
- In his interview on the programme *Al Boud Al Akhar* (The Other Dimension), Al-Mufti added that Sudan could ask for the land to be returned to Sudanese sovereignty.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 22 February)

- The High representative of the EU, Joseph Borell, said in a statement that urgent and full humanitarian aid is required in Tigray. He also said that allegations of Human Rights abuses need to be investigated and that International Law is respected.
- Four months after the start of the war - because we can call it war - 80% of the 6 million Tigray population are still unreachable. And there are areas where fighting is still going and there is no humanitarian access, said High Representative of EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Joseph Borrell in his press remarks.
- The United Nations Human Rights Councils 46th session started on Monday and will last till the 23rd of March. Among other things, the annual report on the situation in Eritrea will be discussed.
- The Ethiopian Macha-Tulama Oromo Organisation (USA Board) speaks of the alarming situation of Oromo political prisoners who are on hunger strike since 27 January 2021.
- The Macha Tulama Organisations states that "Putting parts of Oromia under a Command Post, a de-facto military rule with far reaching mandates including unauthorised search, arrest, jail, and extra judicial killings have put the country on a very dangerous course."
- The Macha Tulama Organisations says that "Ongoing Wars in Oromia and Tigray, and massive displacements in Metekel and other areas, have robbed the people of any hope for peace and democracy."
- According to Deutsche Welle, the conflict in Tigray is straining Ethiopian German relations. Both Chancellor Merkel and foreign minister Maas have raised concern about the situation.
- Dutch member of Parliament Martijn van Helvert held a Facebook session, where he answered questions about the conflict in Tigray.
- The United States has announced it would decouple some of the aid to Ethiopia from the GERD dam issue. The pause in aid affects 272 million dollars. Reassessment includes humanitarian aid to Tigray.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 91 - 24 February 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 23 February)

- Human Trafficker and Eritrean national, Kidane Zekarias, who was tried and convicted on serious human trafficking charges in Addis Ababa, has escaped from a federal high court premise. Leading an extensive human trafficking network, and known for cruelty perpetrated on refugees, he was one of the most wanted traffickers. He was arrested in March 2020.
- Lieutenant General Yasser Atta of the Sudan Sovereign Council states to have information “about the presence of Eritrean forces on our borders in Ethiopian military uniform.”
- President and CEO of Save the Children US, Janti Soeripto said, “Since arriving in Axum, Central Tigray in early February, Save the Children has met families who have not eaten for days”.
- She states that Save the Children have reached over 4,300 people with essential supplies and food distributions, but the area is in desperate need of more support.
- Reports of air strikes in Samre and Yechilay areas today by Ethiopian air force.
- Reports of various fires have been detected within neighboring settlements in Saharti, South Eastern of Tigray. The location falls within an active area of fighting.
- Tigray Media House reported that more than 80 civilians have been killed by Ethiopian and Eritrean troops at Abi-Adi (near teacher’s college) and villages of Guroro. The troops took IDs of the victims.
- A witness from Mekelle states that the Meles Zenawi Academy was set on fire and he saw clouds of smoke from his house 4km away.
- According to a witness who was an Eritrean refugee in the Shemelba camp in Tigray Eritrean troops entered the camp on 17 November at 14:00 hours. In the previous days, from 15/11 to 17/11 people from the Hitsats refugee camp came to the Shemelba refugee camp.
- The witness says that the Eritrean fighters collected all the young refugees. They took us for a meeting and told us “we control 80% of Tigray. We fight to control Mekelle. Now we control this area.”
- The Eritrean troops that entered Shemelba stated on the 21th of November that “The Government of Eritrea forgives all of you and you can go back to your country.” They also told us not to leave the camp, because we would be shot, killed, says the witness: “anyone who goes outside will be our enemy and you must inform us if someone leaves the camp. Otherwise hard punishment will follow.”
- According to the report, refugees “remained silent” when asked if they would return to Eritrea. The Eritrean soldiers then went from house to house to ask each of the refugees. We told them “We do not want to go, if we are to go then the Red Cross can take us, not the Eritrean Government.” The members of the Shemelba Refugee Committee gave them this message, so they were blamed.
- Then there was a curfew set by the Eritrean soldiers, who were taking things by force from the shops in the camp and moving around in the camp. From the 23rd of November they started to arrest people in the camp. On the 25th of November, the chairman of the Refugee Committee was arrested together with two other members of the committee, including two singers, said the witness.
- The witness says that the chairman of the youth club was arrested; the chairman of the youth club disappeared or escaped. They arrested four women and their children: “We do not know why. In the evening seven children were arrested, and again we did not know why. They disappeared.”

- During this time from 28/11 - 17/12 nine children died. Six persons near zone 1 in Shemelba were killed and 5 refugees who had come from Hitsats were killed and one Tigrayan who was in the camp.
- "The six people that were killed were put in front of us", says the witness, "They were together in one hole and they shot them from the back of their head. You could not recognise their faces. They had been kicked in their faces."
- "On 17 December there was fighting between Eritrean troops and the Tigray troops. At that time they were arrested and the situation in the camp was very bad. They kept us for many hours. They killed many animals and also people. We saw corpses on the way on the ground. No one of them had weapons, they were wearing normal clothes. Near Shemelba they threw many bodies." he states.
- The witness states: "There are fruit gardens and in one of them they threw 23 persons in a well. There were many bodies in the well and the smell was very bad."
- "On 17 December we were collected, the last group to leave Shemelba" the witness states, "we were more than 300, the last group to be arrested. They took us to Shiraro. We were there until 25 December. Then they took us to Badme, to take us to Eritrea. We were arrested before they told us, we will take you to Eritrea. The guards were very tough."
- In May Hansi five pregnant women delivered babies between May Kohli and Shiraro and we didn't know what happened to them, the witness states.
- The witness says that just before they arrived in Badme a shoot out started and in the chaos they were able to escape: "some to the West, some to the South. Even soldiers were running to different places."
- The group of four that escaped together reached Shiraro, one of them wounded and they went to the Christian church where someone gave them some "small money", also in the mosque they received some food and then traveled to Shire. The group arrived in Mekelle on 28/12.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 23 February)

- The EU has urged Ethiopia to end the "blackout" in Tigray.
- The head of the Norwegian Refugee Council, Egeland, said that there is still very little access to Tigray. He also said that "We need also to recognize Ethiopia's been — and is still — extremely generous to refugees. But it doesn't mean that we have to excuse [it] when we see horrible suffering happening,"
- The NRC had a 100 staff in Tigray when the conflict began but has lost contact with them.
- The EU envoy to the Horn, Finnish foreign minister Haavisto, said that the situation in Tigray is getting "militarily and human rights-wise, humanitarian-wise very out of control,". He does not see an end to the conflict either.
- Haavisto said that Ethiopia had failed to provide a clear picture of the situation in Tigray, "including the widely documented involvement of forces from neighbouring Eritrea." He said "The question of Eritrean troops is extremely sensitive, so we don't get a clear answer about the whereabouts or magnitude of the Eritrean troops." He added that Ethiopia is in denial over the gravity of the situation.
- "We are seeing the beginning of one more potentially big refugee crisis in the world," Haavisto said, "If you don't influence it now then the circumstances will build so that there are more and more refugees coming."
- Haavisto found that Sudan is having difficulties coping with the crisis and that a new refugee crisis could be in the making, if the situation is not addressed.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 92 - 25 February 2021

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Reported war situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 24 February)

- According to a witness, Debre Damo Monastery was bombed by Eritrean soldiers on January 11, 2021. The soldiers fired heavy artillery from Sero, Bazet and an intersection road towards Feresmay town.
- "The upper part of the monastery was hit by more than 18 artiliers and in total 28 artiliers landed in the monastery" says the eye witness. The shelling lasted from 7am till 4pm.
- The witness states more than 100 heavy artillery landed at the foot of the monastery without any casualties. "During the bombing, all monks were inside the church. The monks were on a weekly scheduled prayers program from Jan 09, 2021 till January 15, 2021," the witness added.
- The witness says there was no immediate damage to the Abuna Aregawi Church but 26 shelter houses of monks were completely destroyed and burnt. "Metal sheets and wood parts" of the houses were burnt to the ground.
- Historical and heritage houses which were built by Aste. Yohannes IV, Ras Alula, Ras Seyoum and Enda Raesi were among those completely destroyed and burned. "These houses were also heritages of the monastery," says the witness.
- According to the report of the eye witness, there are 150 houses which were built by Aste. Yohannes IV to be used as a shelter for monks.
- The witness says that a monk, aged 67, was killed by the bombing while praying inside his house: "His body was dispersed all over the area and it was very difficult to collect the body parts for burial."
- The report states on Jan 12, 2021, Eritrean soldiers approached the monastery and said they wanted to inspect the monastery. "They fired three bullets to the sky to scare us (the monks) and make their request accepted as the thick leather rope used to climb was already pulled up" says the witness.
- According to the witness, when the monks asked the Eritrean soldiers why they bombed the monastery; the soldiers said they were informed that Debrestion and his soldiers were hiding in the monastery and that is why we were shelling the monastery for the whole day.
- The witness says 6 Eritrean soldiers came back on January 14, 2021 and asked to search everything in the monastery: "All houses of the monks were searched one by one except the church and when they knew nothing was inside, the soldiers regretted their action" says the witness.
- "When we told them about the death of one of our monks from the bombing, the soldiers said you are lucky that you only lost one person; 8 (7 christian and 1 muslim) of our soldiers were killed by a snake" says the witness.
- The witness states 30 Eritreans soldiers came with a car and looted grains, television, generators and other goods of farmers from the surrounding community. Later the car overturned while travelling to a place called Gidera and 28 of them died and only 2 survived.
- According to the witness, Eritrean soldiers still operate in the area surrounding the monastery and sometimes they come to the foot of the monastery but never climb again.
- Ethiopian government has said that it is authorising 135 international organisations to access Tigray. This includes 7 media organisations including AFP News Agency; BBC News; Aljazeera Media Institute; FRANCE 24 English; Reuters; The New York Times and Financial Times.

- South Africa's Tutu Foundation joins the European Union, the United States and several humanitarian organisations in calling for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Tigray.
- "We call for the withdrawal of foreign troops from the Tigray region of Ethiopia, unimpeded access for humanitarian organisations and an investigation into allegations of war crimes by an appropriate international agency such as the UN," says Kotecha, CEO of the Foundation.
- Reports of the Ethiopian government have decided to move more than 6,000 internally displaced people who were sheltered in Axum University to Shire without any prior preparations.
- The Ethiopian Electric Power said electric supply was restored today to some parts of Tigray, including Mekelle after it was disrupted for more than a week.
- According to sources, flights from Addis Ababa to Mekelle has been resumed today.
- Dutch aid workers in Mekelle have said that people are asking them to "tell the world what is going on (in Tigray)".
- The aid workers have visited villages where massacres took place, and spoken to survivors. One of the massacres, which killed 70 people, was perpetrated by soldiers who lost a battle in the area. They also say that Eritrean soldiers have been particularly brutal during the conflict.
- They also said that the situation in Mekelle, while more peaceful than the rest of Tigray, is tense. There are soldiers everywhere, and people are regularly told to stay inside. One also mentioned that several people were shot after the army intervened to take down barricades.
- They also mention being singled out as westerners as they do not want journalists in the area.
- In a Webinar with NGOs, EU envoy to the Horn and Finnish foreign minister, Haavisto, said that there were 4 factions in control of different parts of Tigray. The Federal ENDF, the Eritreans primarily in the North, Amhara militias, and Tigrayan forces.
- Humanitarian aid is allowed to federal controlled areas, but difficult to provide it to other areas.
- He also said that the future of Tigray is problematic. There currently is no trust between Tigrayans and the government, and little possible avenues for dialogue.
- He said that the EU has clearly communicated the importance of 3 points: unfettered access to Tigray, an immediate scale up of Humanitarian aid, and that Eritrean troops leave Tigray.
- Haavisto also said that he has communicated the issue of a humanitarian aid corridor up with Eritrean officials, through the use of the Assab and Massawa ports, and the need for all countries to help.

Situation in the Horn Region(as confirmed per 24 February)

- The ENDF has said that the 15 ENDF soldiers stationed in South Sudan, who have sought refuge with the UN after they refused to board a plane back to Addis Ababa, are "traitors backed by the UNHCR and Tigrayans in the UN ". He further accused them of being representatives of the TPLF.
- The UN undersecretary for peacekeeping missions, has said that all peacekeepers serve under the UN and are protected by "relevant international Law and norms". He added that the ministry of refugees for South Sudan are providing support.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 24 February)

- UK government Minister for Africa, James Duddridge pressed the need with the Ethiopian Embassy in the UK for urgent action to allow full humanitarian access to Tigray. He also set out the UK's concerns about continued impunity. Human rights must be upheld, and abuses and violations investigated.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 93 - 26 February 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 25 February)

- An official with the Tigray's region provisional administration told state media that troops from a "neighbouring country" destroyed factories and universities during the conflict in Ethiopia's northern Tigray state, apparently referring to Eritrea.
- Alula Habteab, who heads the provisional administration's Construction, Road and Transport Bureau, appeared to openly criticise soldiers from Eritrea, as well as the neighbouring Amhara region, for their actions during the conflict.
- "There were armies from a neighbouring country and a neighbouring region who wanted to take advantage of the war's objective of law enforcement," he told the state media.
- According to the official, troops from across the border had destroyed major factories in Tigray, such as the Almeda Textile and Adigrat pharmaceuticals factories, and two major universities in Adigrat and Axum. "These forces have inflicted more damage than the war itself," added the official.
- He also accused the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) of having "seized numerous properties" which belong to the Tigray state government, including many machineries which belong to private contractors. "Universities and factories Tigray produced over the last 30 years have all been destroyed," says the official.
- In a letter addressed to the editor of DEVEX and EU observer, the Ethiopian Embassy in Brussels states it is regrettable that the statement and facts given by Mr. Pekka Haavisto about the situation in Ethiopia does not reflect the reality on the ground and contains unsubstantiated claims.
- The letter added the Ethiopian government was willing to facilitate travel to the region for the Foreign Minister to have first-hand account, however, Minister Haavisto showed no interest to travel to the region, but instead resorted to visit the refugee camp in Sudan and "extrapolate grossly inadequate information" to provide unfolded claims that put unnecessary pressure on the Ethiopian government.
- The letter posted on the official website of the Embassy says the assertion made by the Minister stating: "You have come to a situation which is militarily and human rights-wise, humanitarian-wise very out of control," does not reflect, by any means whatsoever, the tangible progress being registered thus far.
- "The Minister's inaccurate narrative does not also go along with the testimonies given by officials from different international humanitarian organizations operating in the region" says the letter issued by the Embassy.
- The letter also says the Foreign Minister's assertion that: "The government themselves do not have a clear picture, particularly in areas controlled by Eritreans" is what one would not expect from a person in the high office and representing the European Union. "Such a statement is by far an erroneous claim and at best a condescending view towards Ethiopia," added the Embassy.
- Amnesty International (AI) report says between 19 and 29 Nov. 2020, Eritrean troops operating in Aksum, Tigray, committed a series of human rights and humanitarian law violations, including killing hundreds of civilians.

- “Over an approximately 24-hour period on 28 - 29 Nov. 2020, Eritrean soldiers deliberately shot civilians on the street and carried out systematic house-to-house searches, extrajudicially executing men and boys,” says the AI report
- The report also says that :”In the immediate aftermath of the massacre, Eritrean troops shot at those who sought to remove bodies from the streets”.
- Reported that the rape victims in Ayder Referral and Mekelle hospitals are being forcefully evacuated following the arrival of international media institutions.
- Reports of air strikes in Samre, Yechilay and Temben areas by Ethiopian allied air force.
- According to multiple sources, the ancient Monastery of Maryam Qaretsa, near Samre town was bombed by ENDF allied forces. The fate of over 100 monks in the monastery remains unknown.
- Satellite imagery shows that 508 buildings have been burned down near Gijet town last week.
- DX Open Network analysis says that this indicates that it was part of an intentional effort, rather than combat operations.
- According to the Africa Report, the conflict in Tigray has had a significant impact on the Ethiopian economy. The currency has inflated by 19% and the IMF projected GDP growth for 2020 has been re-adjusted to 0%. In comparison, the economy grew by 10% last year.

Situation in the Horn Region(as confirmed per 25 February)

- Sudan Tribune says Eritrea has distanced itself from the ongoing border tensions between Sudan and Ethiopia and called for an amicable solution to the dispute.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 25 February)

- The United States says it remains deeply concerned by Eritrean troops in Ethiopia’s Tigray region, and by credible reports that they are committing grave human rights abuses and forcibly returning Eritrean refugees to Eritrea.
- “We urge Eritrea to withdraw its troops immediately from Ethiopia’s Tigray region, and to investigate and hold accountable those responsible for human rights abuses,” says the U.S. statement at the Human Rights Council.
- The UN Special rapporteur on the Human Rights situation in Eritrea has addressed the UN Human Rights Council. He said that he had received credible reports and first hand accounts of “allegations of grave human rights and humanitarian law violations, including extra judicial killings, targeted abductions and forced return of Eritrean refugees and asylum seekers to Eritrea, allegedly by Eritrean forces.”
- He also called for an independent investigation into the refugee camps attacks and the potential kidnapping of Eritrean refugees.
- He has also said that he has requested access to Eritrean asylum seekers and migrants which would be in Eritrean prisons. He has not received a response to previous requests to visit Eritrea and assess the Human Rights situation there.
- The Special Rapporteur has not seen any improvements in Human Rights or the Rule of Law in Eritrea.
- The Eritrean Ambassador has dismissed the report as unjustified and senseless.
- Ethiopians living in the U.S. gather near the White House in Washington, DC in protest to end the ongoing conflict in the Tigray region.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 94 - 01 March 2021

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Amnesty International Report

- Amnesty International has published a report of the massacre in Aksum after having interviewed 41 survivors. The report states that both Ethiopian and Eritrean forces indiscriminately shelled Axum before entering the city. This resulted in the deaths of many civilians. People interviewed said that TPLF forces had already vacated the city, and Eritrean and Ethiopian forces did not face resistance. (22 Nov)
- Following the shelling of the city, soldiers occupied it and started searching for TPLF soldiers. They executed many young men in the process. The killings were based on “even the slightest possible clues”. Wearing camouflage patterned clothing, having pictures of people looking like farmers or fighters on your phone were reasons for execution. (22 Nov)
- Witnesses also reported that some Eritrean soldiers were wearing Ethiopian Army uniforms.
- The massacre started following a TPLF attack on an Eritrean held hill. Some locals helped the attackers while many more cheered on. After the attackers retreated, Eritrean soldiers, supported by reinforcements, went on a rampage through the city. Tanks were deployed by the Eritrean soldiers, and were actively shooting at civilians. (28 - 29 November)
- The hospital was occupied, looted, and patients killed.
- The attacks continued the following day on people that were trying to bury the bodies of the dead. Eritrean soldiers only allowed burials to start late in the afternoon on November 29th.
- The reports conclude that *“The systematic killing of hundreds of civilians by Eritrean forces on 28-29 November may also constitute crimes against humanity.”* It further calls upon Ethiopian authorities to *“stop the further commission of human rights and humanitarian law violations, including indiscriminate shelling and aerial bombardment, and deliberate attacks on civilians.”*
- It further *“urges the African Union, the European Union, the United States, and the United Nations to encourage the Ethiopian authorities to implement the above recommendations.”*

Reported war situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 28 February)

- A UNOCHA report says the humanitarian situation in Tigray region remains critical, with reports of intensified fighting across the region, particularly in the Central Zone.
- OCHA reported incidents of house searches, looting, killings and gender-based violence (GBV) against civilians have continued in the region.
- The report states despite large amounts of food aid reportedly dispatched across Tigray region, better monitoring is needed to ensure that aid is reaching those most in need.
- OCHA added that unimpeded access remains critical to ensure principled humanitarian action in all parts of Tigray. “Additional resources are urgently required to ensure protection activities and other life-saving services to scale up”, said the OCHA report.
- An article published in VICE reported that on 10 January 2021, Eritreans troops burned crops and homes in the village of Debre Harmaz in Central Tigray.
- According to a witness who spoke to VICE from undisclosed location along the Ethio-Sudan border, there was no sign of war or even resistance fighters present when the Eritrean soldiers arrived in his village (Debre Harmaz) and went on a murderous rampage, pillaging and setting homes alight.

- “They shot at everyone, they even killed priests who were hiding in the church,” The witness said. He also heard about neighboring villages experiencing similar destruction that has also gone unreported.
- Reports of ten thousands of internally displaced people (IDPs) have been forcibly relocated from Shire campus of Aksum University to Shire prison and three schools in Shire namely, Tsehay, Embalanso and Hibret following the arrival of international media to Tigray.
- After an investigation during which they spoke to 12 witnesses and 20 relatives, CNN has reported details on a massacre that took place in Edaga Hamus, in which at least 50, but potentially more than 100 people were killed. The massacre was carried out by Eritrean soldiers.
- The massacre took place on November 30th, when many religious pilgrims were celebrating a religious holiday. It went on for 3 days, during which bodies were left lying on the ground.
- Among the victims were at least 20 children, and one pregnant woman,
- Only on December 2nd did they allow burials, but threatened to kill anyone who they saw mourning.
- The New York Times reported that a US government report has concluded that Ethiopian officials, militiamen, and allied fighters, are carrying out ethnic cleansing in Tigray.
- The report says that there is an apparent campaign to force out Tigrayans under the cover of war.
- There have been many reports of translators and journalists being arrested in Tigray. Many have been seized from their homes and brought to unknown locations. The arrests seem to have been carried out by Ethiopian soldiers.
- The interim government of Tigray has also stated that anyone caught providing false information to international media will be arrested.

Reported situation in the Horn Region (as confirmed per 28 February)

- The Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) says an attempt by the U.S. to make pronouncements on Ethiopia's internal affairs and particularly, the reference to the Amhara regional forces redeployment is regrettable.
- The MoFA states it should be clear that such matters are the “sole responsibility” of the Ethiopian government, which is a sovereign nation, is responsible to deploy the necessary security structures and means available in ensuring the rule of law and all concern of its borders.
- “Honoring international obligations and responsibilities should not be deemed by any entity as an invitation to dictate a sovereign nation's internal affairs”, added the Ministry
- Sudanese media has reported that Ethiopian militiamen have kidnapped two Sudanese farmers. The attack allegedly took place in the disputed al-Fashada area.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 28 February)

- The EU High Representative Borell and Crisis Management Commissioner Lenarčič have released a joint statement on the Axum massacre. They condemned the attack and reiterated their previous demands of free access and respect of Human Rights.
- The US secretary of state has said that he is concerned about the situation in Tigray. He condemns the violence, rapes, and other atrocities taking place there. He added that the withdrawal of Eritrean troops and Amhara regional forces from Tigray is an essential first step to peace.
- He has also called on the African Union and other International partners to step up and help solve the crisis. He further called on the International Community to work together to stop the atrocities.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 95 - 02 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Journalism in the conflict (as confirmed per 01 March)

- A BBC reporter, Girmay Gebru, has been arrested. The BBC has been told that he was sent to a military camp.
- Two local “fixers” for foreign journalists were arrested by the Ethiopian army. Fitsum Berhane who works for AFP and Alula Akalu for the Financial Times. This is in line with reports over the weekend of translators and other “fixers” being arrested.
- AFP calls on the Ethiopian authorities to release a man who was arrested while he was serving as a translator for a team of its journalists reporting in the Tigray region.
- According to the AFP, Fitsum Berhane was arrested after working for three days as a translator for a team of AFP journalists duly accredited by the Ethiopian authorities for a series of reports in the northern region of Tigray.
- Other translators and “fixers” have said that they have been threatened with arrest or death if they lead journalists to mass graves or sensitive spots.
- “We have not been informed of any specific charges against Fitsum Brhane. His collaboration with a media outlet should not be a motive for his arrest, and we call for his immediate release,” said Phil Chetwynd, AFP’s Global News Director.

Reported war situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 01 March)

- USAID has deployed a Disaster Assistance Response Team to respond to growing humanitarian needs stemming from conflict in Ethiopia’s Tigray region.
- According to the USAID, the team will identify priority needs to scale up assistance and work with partners to provide life-saving aid to people in need.
- Reported that two academic staff members of Mekelle University have been arrested by Ethiopian troops and they are currently detained at Hibret Defense College near Mekelle University main campus
- Getachew Reda, advisor to the President of Tigray government, said that the US State Department statement urging Eritrean and Amhara forces to withdraw from Tigray is commendable, but doubted that the Ethiopian government would follow them.
- In a series of tweets he attacked the Ethiopian government. He has not posted anything on twitter since December, and the Ethiopian government has claimed to have killed him.
- Getachew also claims that 8 Eritrean divisions have been sent South of Mekelle to fight Tigray forces.
- Reported in social media that Ethiopian and Eritrean troops are shooting and looting residents of Mekelle near Mesfin Industrial Engineering factory and scores are reported to have been injured.
- There have been further reports of Eritrean telecom being installed in Northern Tigray regions. Similarly the Eritrean dial code has been reportedly expanded into Tigray.
- According to aid organisations in Sudan, more refugees are coming in from Tigray.
- The Ethiopian government has rejected a US call to withdraw regional forces from Tigray.

- According to The Reporter, Ethiopian banks are seeing an increase in non-performing loans as people based in Tigray have stopped paying back their loans. Several big banks have been “highly affected”.

Human Rights Violations (as confirmed per 01 March)

- There are numerous reports of Tigrayans being deported from the Western Tigrayan Lowlands by Amharic regional forces. They are being deported to Central Tigray. Only those that can be identified as Amharic can remain.
- Tigrayans that have not been deported yet are being put under “quarantine”. They have little to no access to food and emergency supplies.
- According to reports the administrative boundaries in Western Tigray have been abolished. Villages and places are reportedly being given entirely new names.
- Unconfirmed reports say that in Humera, Regional Amharic militias are killing Tigrayans and have prepared trucks to transport people to Shiraro.
- According to sources, female students from Ayder Referral Hospital College of Health Sciences in Mekelle were raped yesterday by Ethiopian troops while traveling from the library to their dormitories.
- The raped victims of the College are currently receiving treatment at Ayder Referral Hospital.
- Human Rights Watch (HRW) said Ethiopian federal forces carried out apparently indiscriminate shelling of urban areas in the Tigray region in November 2020 in violation of the law of war.
- The HRW report shows that artillery attacks at the start of the armed conflict struck homes, hospitals, schools, and markets in the city of Mekelle, and the towns of Humera and Shire, killing at least 83 civilians, including children, and wounding over 300.
- “These attacks have shattered civilian lives in Tigray and displaced thousands of people, underscoring the urgency for ending unlawful attacks and holding those responsible to account,” said Laetitia Bader, Horn of Africa director at HRW.

Reported in Horn region (as confirmed per 01 March)

- Clashes are continuing between Sudan and Ethiopian supported militias. The Sudanese military announced that it had retaken control over a part of the Al-fashada area after Ethiopian backed militias took control of it over the weekend.
- The military official added that the Sudanese army set up a camp in the “Hassan Kardi ” area, off the border with Ethiopia, and continues to inspect the border area to verify the presence of militia or not.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 01 March)

- The United Nations Security Council will focus on the situation in Tigray and Yemen on March 11th.
- The USUN ambassador, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, has said that the US is prepared to elevate and table the crisis in Ethiopia.
- The Swedish Prime Minister reiterated deep concern for Tigray, the need for de-escalation, full humanitarian access and protection of civilians.
- Assita Kanko, Member the Europe Parliament, urges Eritrean troops to withdraw from Tigray and she is waiting for an answer from HR Borell about the activation of clauses under the Cotonou Protocol.
- The Ireland Mission at the UN says UNSC will discuss troop-contributing countries to the UN Mission in South Sudan this week.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 96 - 03 March 2021

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Journalism in the conflict (as confirmed per 02 March)

- The Committee to Protect journalists has said that the Ethiopian government should release the journalist and media workers and provide guarantees that “the press can cover the conflict in Tigray without intimidation.” In an environment where there is already a “scarcity of independent reporting”, intimidation will lead to self-censorship.”
- The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission has said that it is concerned about the reports of journalists arrests in Tigray. It says that arresting journalists and fixers for foreign correspondents is by no means an appropriate response and authorities should either bring credible charges or release them.

Reported war situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 02 March)

- In a piece for the Boston review, Alex de Waal has said that “We Can No Longer Deny the Atrocities in Ethiopia”. The Africa expert argues that this prevents effective action to help people out of the dire situation: “The “international community”—have known for months that something truly horrendous is happening. But like shocked onlookers, they haven’t wanted to believe the facts. “
- He argues that by accepting the Ethiopian government's stance that it is a necessary step for democratic reform in the country, it blinds the international community to believing the atrocities taking place on the ground.
- He criticised Amnesty International for its first report on the conflict regarding the Mai Kadra massacre. The report, accusing the TPLF of committing the massacre, turned out to be based on three interviews and created a false impression of the conflict.
- According to de Waal, the Ethiopian army has collapsed in most of Tigray, and the brute fighting is being done by Eritrean troops. If they were to leave the area, the TPLF would resurge, and is still in fact in control of “huge” parts of the countryside.
- He further criticised the “breakthrough” the UN announced when two dozen aid workers were allowed into Tigray to deliver supplies. The teams are too small to provide effective and efficient support to those who need it, and acts more as a token force. He added that humanitarian organisations “too have been intimidated. The agencies fear being expelled from Ethiopia if they speak out.”
- The WHO Director for the Health emergency programme, Michael Ryan, said that they are concerned about the unfolding situation in Tigray.
- He further said that refugees live in overcrowded camps and conditions and that “...diseases, malaria, and other infectious diseases will continue to rise as long as the population remains in these circumstances.” High malnutrition and lack of access to water increase this risk further.
- Mr Ryan finished his statement saying that emergency services in the region were disrupted and not capable of delivering the essential healthcare pack.
- In an interview with CNN, the ousted Tigray President Debretsion Gebremichael, has said that “all acts of genocide” are being carried out in Tigray. He called for investigations into these atrocities and urged the Biden administration to keep the pressure up.

Human Rights Violations (as confirmed per 02 March)

- Al Jazeera has published new stories of survivors in Tigray after it has gained access to Tigray. The author of the article was identified as "Al Jazeera Staff".
- Several of the accounts come from Mai Kadra, where 600 people were killed at the start of the conflict. They implicate Eritrean soldiers, who raped and killed civilians there.
- Further reports are coming in of Amhara militias rounding up and killings civilians. The Tigrayans are reportedly being transported further into Tigray, many areas of which are still in open conflict.
- Several social media reports say that Amhara militias killed 250 people near Humera over the last days.
- Reports of Eritrean troops have intensified indiscriminate shelling of villages and civilians around Hawzen and Azeba areas.
- Tghat has published a new personal account of a professor that was present during the Axum massacre in November. The author, a professor at Adigrat University, says he lost a brother in the massacre. Another sister of his was wounded. His account is in line with the findings that Amnesty International published on Friday.
- Two female medical doctors of Ayder Referral Hospital have been raped by Ethiopian soldiers.

Reported in Horn region (as confirmed per 02 March)

- Fighting on the border between Sudan and Ethiopia continues to be reported in Al-Fashada. Sudanese media claims that Ethiopian forces are supported by Eritrean troops.
- Egypt and Sudan have signed a military cooperation agreement. Officials have said that both countries face similar threats to national security and want to achieve better coordination between their respective militaries.
- Speaking at the ceremony, Mohamed Farid, Chief-of-Staff of the Egyptian Armed Forces said Egypt would not hesitate to quickly come to Sudan's aid if needed. "The resources, strong will and resolve are there to implement what we have agreed to counter emergency situations," he added.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 02 March)

- The Ethiopian Ambassador to the EU said her government would lodge a formal complaint to High representative Borell over Finnish Foreign minister and EU special envoy Haavisto's characterisation of the situation in Tigray. They say it is not accurate and full of misinformation.
- US secretary of state Blinken has spoken with Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on the phone. Blinken urged Ethiopia to take "immediate and concrete steps to protect civilians, including refugees, and to prevent further violence".
- He further pressed on the issue of immediate withdrawal of Eritrean and Amhara forces from Tigray.
- United Nations Human Rights Chief, Michell Bachelet said it is crucial that full and unimpeded access be immediately given to the whole Tigray region of Ethiopia.
- According to diplomats, the UN Security Council is expected to hold informal discussions on Thursday on the humanitarian situation in Ethiopia. The US, UK, France, Ireland, Norway and Estonia are looking to raise the issue in AOB format.

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Links of interest

[Alex de Waals piece in the Boston review](#)

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 97 - 04 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 03 March)

- Ethiopia's Foreign Minister has prepared a document which lays out the strategy the Ethiopian government is following in response to the increasing international pressure from the international community. The full document can be accessed [here](#)
- Oromo Federalist Congress (OFC) has decided to pull out of the upcoming Ethiopia election. OFC was repeatedly complaining about the arrest of its top leadership members and closure of offices.
- Yesterday, OFC urged for national dialogue and consensus before holding the elections.

Reported war situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 03 March)

- Gender-based violence (GBV) in Adigrat is very critical. So far, more than 170 cases were reported.
- 40 self-reported victims of GBV visited Adigrat hospital in a single day and needed referral services.
- Tigray's interim administration said the whereabouts of 1 million people in Western Tigray is unknown.
- Tigray Media House reported more than 80 young men were murdered by Amhara forces in Humera town, Western Tigray following the U.S. call for their withdrawal from the Tigray region.
- Church leaders have condemned the attacks, destruction and looting of monasteries and churches in Tigray by UAE drones, Amhara, ENDF and Eritrean forces and massacres of the clergy and the faithful.
- The statement was issued by Employees of Mekelle Diocese, Abbots of 45 Monasteries and Employees of 2 Woreda Parishes within the Diocese of the Ethiopia Orthodox Tewahedo Church and has set out the following demands:
 - The withdrawal of the Eritrean army and Amhara forces from Tigray and stop destruction
 - Independent international investigation into the atrocities committed on the people of Tigray
 - The return of religious relics looted by the Eritrean army and Amahra forces
 - For UNESCO to exert efforts to protect religious and historical heritages from suffering destruction and seek return of looted ones to their original places
 - For international community to facilitate unrestricted access to humanitarian aid all over Tigray
 - Facilitating access of medical equipment and medicine to the people of Tigray
 - Call for international community to intervene to bring the war on Tigray to a stop
 - Call for international community to facilitate peace for education to resume in Tigray
 - Call for Tigrayan members of clergy as well as the diaspora to sustain efforts to expose the atrocities committed on Tigray people until it finds a solution
 - Call in the name of God for all parties involved in the conflict to cease hostility and to settle differences through dialogue
- Alex Dewaal says Eritrean and Ethiopian troops cut down the mango orchards at Adeba and Tseada on the Zamra river in south-central Tigray.
- "It's not a massacre, a mass rape or torture. But chopping down those fruit trees is evidence for the war aims of the leaders in Asmara and Addis Ababa," Alex Dewaal said.
- The report states destroying fruit trees is a specially egregious form of starvation crime and the wanton destruction of the orchards reveals the intent of the armies rampaging through Tigray.
- A joint press statement given by three Political Parties of Tigray (Salsay Weyane Tigray, National Congress of Great Tigray, and Tigray Independence Party) welcomed the U.S. stand with regard to the

deteriorating situation in Tigray and says the forces that are operating wantonly in Tigray are disregarding international law.

- “We don't believe the forces will comply with the demand of the international community: So, we call the international community to use all instruments to enforce the demands,” said the statement.
- The statement also says “We deeply regret the statement given by the foreign minister of Ethiopia and ethnic cleansing cannot be overlooked in the name of sovereignty”.
- “The Ethiopian government has taken full responsibility for the deployment of Amhara forces and crimes committed. It is ironic that the government that has invited a foreign force to invade part of its land and massacre its people is concerned about the issue of sovereignty,” added the statement.
- The statement calls for an immediate withdrawal of all forces from Tigray and a full and independent international investigation into all human rights violations, abuses, atrocities, and to make sure that the perpetrators do not go with impunity.
- The Ethiopian Prime minister office released a press release in which it announced it had started investigations into “TPLF” massacres in Western Tigray, notably Mai Kadra and Humera. As a result it said it had apprehended 21 individuals.
- The statement said that independent investigations had been launched into atrocities committed in other parts of Tigray.
- It is important to note that the vast majority of atrocities have been reportedly committed by Ethiopian government aligned forces. Numerous organisations and witnesses have reported that it were Ethiopian, Eritrean, and Amhara troops who indiscriminately shelled Humera and carried out executions of civilians. Still there are reports of deportations and executions of Tigrayans in the area.
- It also said that it would not hinder the mobility of the media wanting “to venture outside of ENDF stationed areas”. It would however happen at their own risk, and the Ethiopian government would not be responsible for risks taken by the media.
- The press release also emphasized twice that media personnel and humanitarian aid personnel given access to Tigray would be held accountable if they were to breach any federal laws.
- Recent pictures of Eritrean troops operating in Adigrat, Eastern Zone, Tigray.

Journalism in the conflict (as confirmed per 03 March)

- The journalist (Girmay Gebru) and three fixers detained over the weekend(Fistum Berhane, Alula Akalu and Tamirat Yemane) have been released today.

Reported in Horn region (as confirmed per 03 March)

- During a joint press conference with his Sudanese counterpart, the Egyptian Foreign minister said that negotiations had “arrived at crossroads.” He continued by saying that Egypt supported the efforts by Sudan to involve the EU, US, and UN in the GERD dam negotiations.
- The Sudanese Foreign minister said it would not give up “Its rights or its land”.
- They both called for a legally binding agreement regarding the Dam.
- “The tendency to invite various parties as mediators to the issue while AU-led negotiations has not been finalized is demeaning the efforts of the AU,” an Ethiopian official said in a press conference.
- The statement was in response to the call by Sudan and Egypt for engaging international mediation after the failure of previous talks under the AU.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 03 March)

- Sec. Blinken urged Kenyan leadership in working with the U.S. on the UN Security Council to address the crisis in Ethiopia’s Tigray region, particularly in light of recent reports of atrocities and a worsening humanitarian situation.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 98 - 05 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 04 March)

- According to diplomatic sources, U.S. Secretary of State Blinken spoke to Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy twice and told him that Eritrean and Amhara forces must be withdrawn from Tigray within 72 hours.
- He further said that the Prime Minister had to dissociate himself from the Eritrean regime, cease all hostile activities immediately (without pre-conditions) and allow full and unimpeded humanitarian assistance to all parts of Tigray.
- He also offered US mediation between Ethiopia and the TPLF.
- Following the call, Prime minister Abiy reportedly met with his top officials in which they agreed that he would travel to Asmara on March 4th to discuss with President Issayas of Eritrea. The trip would not be announced.
- The meeting also showed divisions within the Ethiopian government, with some wanting to agree to the US's proposals, while others were more reluctant. Some also believe that Ethiopia was betrayed by its friends.

Reported war situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 04 March)

- It is reported that the Amhara forces have murdered 80 Tigrayan civilians in Humera, Western Tigray and threw them into the Tekeze river.
- There are reports that some Eritrean troops are deserting, taking off their uniforms and hiding in the Tigrayan countryside.
- The interim government of Tigray has said that they are unanimous in their opinion that Eritrean troops need to leave Tigray immediately. They say that Eritrean troops have committed crimes in the areas they control.
- According to sources, Eritrea has sent more troops to Adi Berak, an area between Adwa and Rama. The troops that are being sent have a very cruel reputation.
- Eritrean troops stationed near Axum have reportedly been shelling Gelila Mountain, South of the city.
- Eritrean forces have reportedly shelled highland villages around Adigrat, Eastern Tigray.
- Fighting continues between Tigray forces and Eritrean forces in North Western Tigray, between Shire and Endabaguna.
- Fighting is also continuing Southwest of Wukro. The area is still controlled by Tigray forces.
- The Eritrean army has retaken Samre, and Tigrayans have retreated deeper into the countryside. According to sources, Eritrean soldiers threatened to cut "a hand and a leg" of local inhabitants if Tigrayan forces came back and received support. It is a reference to the punishment former Ethiopian kings would carry out on traitors.
- Heavy fighting is also taking place in Adishuhu, 60 km South of Mekelle. Tigrayan forces are facing off against forces from Eritrea, the ENDF and Amhara militias. Air strikes and artillery were being used during the fighting

Human Rights situation (as confirmed per 04 March)

- UN Human rights chief, Bachelet, has said that 139 rapes had been reported in Mekelle.

- She said that incidents of atrocities, sexual violence and looting kept being reported to the UN and that “Credible information also continues to emerge about serious violations of international human rights law and humanitarian law by all parties”.
- She also reported that 8 protesters had been killed in Adigrat, Mekelle, Shire and Wukro between 9 and 10 February.
- Her office had also further corroborated certain incidents that had occurred in the conflict, including “indiscriminate shelling in Mekelle, Humera and Adigrat towns in Tigray region, and reports of grave human rights violations and abuses including mass killings in Axum, and in Dengelat in central Tigray by Eritrean armed forces.”
- Analysis received suggests that multiple parties to the conflict, including the ENDF, Eritrean forces, TPLF, Amhara forces, and other militias had committed “violations of international law”, possibly amounting to war crimes.
- The UN Chief of Human rights asked Ethiopia on Thursday that monitors be allowed into Tigray. They would be tasked with investigating claims of killings and sexual violence which could amount to war crimes.
- Ethiopian diplomacy with Eritrea is allegedly being carried out directly by Prime minister Abiy. The official Ethiopian ambassador to Eritrea, was supposedly not able to present his credentials as Ambassador due to comments he made during the Ethiopia Eritrea border war of 1998-2000. He has instead been appointed as spokesperson of the Command Post of the Federal Government’s State of Emergency on Tigray. It is not known whether another ambassador has been appointed.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 04 March)

- Following the UNSC meeting, US Ambassador to the UN, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, gave a press conference during which she urged the Ethiopian government to support an immediate end to the fighting and prompt withdrawal of Eritrean troops and Amhara regional forces.
- The Ambassador emphasized that their withdrawal is an essential step to bring peace in Tigray.
- The Biden Administration has announced it was appointing a Special Envoy to the Horn.
- Estonia and Norway called for an end to hostilities and uphold international and human rights law, and independent investigation into violations and abuses and for Eritrean troops to withdraw.
- UN Relief Chief, Mark Lowcock told UNSC that it's clear to everyone that Eritrean defense forces are operating throughout Tigray and said they must leave Ethiopia.
- The Thursday UN Security Council session on Tigray ended with no agreement, diplomats say.
- The diplomats said veto-wielding Russia and China and non-permanent member India objected to the joint statement on the grounds that it interfered in Ethiopia’s internal affairs.
- The Washington Post editorial board wrote an opinion in which it urged the Biden Administration to be firm in his interactions with Ethiopia. It should not resume aid until “U.S. priorities on Tigray are met” and also said that the US administration should be prepared to put sanctions on Ethiopia if necessary.
- UNSG, António Guterres, fully supports the statement made by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michell Bachelet, his spokesperson said. He further calls on Eritrea to withdraw its troops from Tigray.
- Tomorrow, Human Rights Watch (HRW) will release a report on abuses committed during a joint Ethiopian and Eritrean offensive on Axum in November.
- Amnesty International said the UN must immediately launch an investigation into ongoing allegations of grave violations in the Tigray region, citing an investigation by CNN as well as one of its own.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 99 - 08 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Sexual violence in the conflict (as confirmed per 07 March)

- In an article published in Deutsche Welle (DW), a witness at Adigrat Hospital said every day, Eritrean soldiers come to take medical equipment and patients and doctors are terrified.
- "They come here every day, even twice a day," said a general practitioner at the hospital. "Yesterday, they stole a stretcher. When they come, not only the patients, but also the staff run away. The treatments get interrupted."
- "These (cases) are only those who have access to this hospital, but we don't know what happens in the 18 districts in the Eastern Tigray Zone - what happens to the mother, what happens to the other members of the community," added the witness (doctor).
- The doctor said women are being gang-raped, drugged and gravely injured in the assaults. One woman was held captive for over ten days, raped by 23 Eritrean soldiers, then left on the side of the road. Surgeons had to remove stones and nails that had been inserted inside her genitals.
- According to the report, the hospital of Adigrat has received over 174 rape survivors. But, there are likely many more cases unaccounted for in rural villages.
- A woman was raped in Mekelle, then killed in front of her three sons. They were not allowed to remove the body for three days. Nuns of a monastery were raped by Eritrean troops in Wukro town.

Eritrean Involvement in the Conflict (as confirmed per 07 March)

- The Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that Ethiopia did not invite Eritrean troops to engage in the Tigray region during the government's law enforcement operation.
- The Spokesman said that "No official military agreement exists between the two countries. We have not made an official invitation for Eritrean troops to be involved in the Tigray region,".
- He also said that following the rocket attack by the TPLF to Asmara, Eritrean troops positioned on the porous borders areas of the two neighboring countries could have possibly moved into the Ethiopian territory. However, he did not unequivocally comment on whether Eritrean troops have been involved.
- Previously, EEPA reported that Eritrean troops invaded Tigray on 3-4 November, prior to the start of the law and order operation and prior to the bombings of Asmara, which happened after Tigray had been attacked by drones from Assab.
- Speaking about Eritrean forces, Dina said they can participate in the operation if invited by the Ethiopian government. "As a sovereign nation, we can invite Somalia, Sudan or Eritrea," said Dina, "but, what we are saying is there has not been any request from Ethiopia for military support."
- Residents of Adigrat told Deutsche Welle (DW) that a battle was unfolding a few kilometers West of Adigrat, saying sounds of heavy fighting could be heard in the villages.
- According to two eyewitness accounts, Eritrean soldiers later entered the town of Azeba about 30 kilometers from Adigrat and opened fire on civilians on the market day.
- Deutsche Welle reports states civilians interviewed from Mekelle as well as Central and Northern Tigray said both Eritrean and Ethiopian defense forces were allegedly behind the killings and rapes.
- People in Mekelle want Eritrean troops to leave the region immediately.
- Pictures of captured Eritrean troops wearing ENDF uniforms and Eritrean 'Congos' (plastic shoes) have been circulating on social media. Many of them seem underage.
- Reports of Eritrean troops removing uniforms for civilian clothes.

Reported situation on the conflict (as confirmed per 07 March)

- Heavy fighting between ENDF allied forces and Tigray forces continues in Gijet, Samre, and South of Mekelle areas and rural areas are under control of Tigray forces.
- Hayalu Godefay, chairman of an opposition party in Tigray (Salsay Woyane), said that the mandate to oust the TPLF is for the people of Tigray: "The people of Tigray have elected their leaders, so we don't need a government that is controlled by Addis. It is imposed on the people of Tigray," added Hayalu.
- The chairman of the Salsay Woyane Party says: "I don't have the moral (authority) to convince the youth of Tigray that peaceful struggle will bring you the land that has been snatched away."
- The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) said it is alarmed by the "cultural cleansing", destruction of sites in Tigray, looting of manuscripts and artefacts and illicit trafficking.
- The Ethiopian government said Sudan and Egypt have been involved in the Metekel Zone and other (internal) conflicts in the country.

Human Rights situation (as confirmed per 07 March)

- Human Rights Watch has released a report on the massacre that occurred in Axum. They interviewed 28 witnesses and examined photographic evidence from the massacre, corroborating the AI report.
- It describes an indiscriminate shelling of the city on November 19th after Tigrayan troops had withdrawn from the city up to 8 pm. Eritrean and Ethiopian forces entered the city the next morning.
- Subsequently Eritrean (and according to some Ethiopian as well) troops pillaged the city for a week.
- The day of the massacre started with between 10 and 30 Tigrayan soldiers attacking an Eritrean "base". They were joined by many young people who were angry at the pillaging from the previous week.
- The indiscriminate killing started in the morning and continued until the evening of the next day.
- In the report witnesses describe "Ethiopian and Eritrean forces indiscriminately shot at civilians". Eritrean soldiers continued to pillage the city for a week after the massacre. Some witnesses describe Ethiopian soldiers participating, but most say that they "did nothing".
- Eritrean soldiers went from house to house, looking for, and then executing young men.
- HRW received names of people killed in Axum, corresponding with names given by interviewees

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 07 March)

- The Ethiopian government has instructed all embassies to engage in Twitter campaigns and demonstrations to protest unnecessary pressure on Ethiopia, including on March 11th in Brussels.
- In a leaked zoom video meeting, Ethiopian Ambassador to the UK, Teferi Melese, told local diaspora groups how to push back accusations of genocide, rape and weaponized hunger.
- A U.S. letter writing campaign is also launched urging Ethiopian diaspora and friends of Ethiopia to urge members of the U.S. Congress to work with the Biden Administration to support Ethiopia.
- In the US Senate, Risch (R-Idaho) and Cardin (D-Md.) reintroduced a bill calling for the peaceful resolution of the Tigray conflict and for belligerents to cooperate with independent investigations.
- Egyptian Pres Sisi said in a presser with Sudan's Al-Burhan that a second filling threatened Egyptian and Sudanese interests, supporting launching GERD negotiations with UN, AU, EU, and US participation.
- The UN Sec-Gen said that the UN was available to support and participate in GERD negotiations.
- A draft resolution was dropped after India, China, and Russia levelled further objections on the grounds of non interference in the internal affairs of Ethiopia and an additional objection to the Council's draft statement, which also called for the "need for all parties to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law, including those related to the protection of civilians and protection against sexual and gender-based violence."

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 100 - 10 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Sexual violence in the conflict (as confirmed per 09 March)

- In Shire, a 15 year old teenager was raped by ENDF soldiers in a condominium housing while everyone watched including her brother and no one could do anything about it.
- In Kerseber, a woman was abducted by Eritrean troops and was gang raped twice. Once by three people and then by 12. She was unable to walk when she came to the hospital and reported that there were 8 more women in her block who experienced the same violence.
- In Ayder Referral Hospital, Mekelle, a medical student was raped by a federal police. She was walking back from the library with her friend at night. Her friend escaped but was physically assaulted with bruises on her body. Medical evidence supports anal penetration. 10 more student survivors have come forward since then.
- A health care professional from Adigrat shared that more than 170 women have reported to the hospital to access care for sexual violence. This number has been increasing and reached a peak of 40 reports in one day a few days ago.
- A 7 months pregnant woman was asked for sexual intercourse by an ENDF soldier. When she refused and said she was pregnant he stomped her belly and went away, this was reported by a health care professional who met her during her follow up.
- A young girl looking after cattle was met by Eritrean soldiers and was asked to go with them but when she refused she was hit with a stone and sustained head injury and was treated in Adigrat hospital.
- In the outskirts of Mekelle, different women were abducted for weeks and worked as maids for the soldiers. And encountered countless sexual abuses.
- In the outskirts of Mekelle, a married woman with children was summoned every night and raped by ENDF soldiers for a week and later came for medical advice.

Eritrean Involvement in the conflict (as confirmed per 09 March)

- A source from Mekelle stated that Eritrean troops have occupied the town of Abi-Adi following the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces.
- Civilians travelling from Mekelle to Adigrat were stopped and robbed by Eritrean troops.
- Eritrean troops have penetrated deep into the mountains near Adigrat. They are taking cattles and food items from farmers who fled to the mountains.
- A source close to the elected Regional Government of Tigray reports that preparations for war were ongoing prior to the 4th of Nov, as "Tigray was already surrounded by different forces including Eritrea which had been unusually moving close to Tigray, way before the election took place in Tigray. The conflict had been evolving since Abyi came to power and continually attacked Tigrayans and the TPLF. When differences widened, TPLF withdrew from the coalitions of EPRDF which was renamed as PP."
- The source states: "The Tigray regional government officially took the position that postponement of national elections was unconstitutional and the Ethiopian federal government was a care-taking government after October 5. The regional government decided that it cannot continue ruling its own region without mandate from the people and accordingly conducted the regional election."
- The source close to the Tigray regional government states that "The federal government, in close collaboration with the Eritrean government, had been making military preparations to launch an attack on Tigray. Already a number of divisions had been mobilized by the federal government towards Gondar, Afar, and Raya to attack Tigray, respectively from the West, East, and Southern parts of Tigray."

- The source states: "The Tigray government received information on a pending attack in the last week of October. Apart from that, the Federal government had been secretly organizing the Northern Command to launch sudden secret operations and kill leaders in Mekelle in times when they gather for meetings or other purposes. The regional government had this intelligence information."
- The source states that "using its special forces in Northern Command, Abiy had planned to suddenly round and kill leaders off the TPLF ruling party leaders when they gather for meetings."
- The source states that "Serious preparations had been taking place for more than two years and that Tigray was militarily surrounded prior to the start of the war." He adds "the ruling party had a meeting four days before the clash with the Northern command, and the preparations of the Abiy and Eritrea were openly discussed."
- A source from Mekelle University stated that he had received a confidential briefing on the tensions arising prior to the 4th of November.

Reported situation on the conflict (as confirmed per 09 March)

- The Guardian states that Ethiopian troops and their allies in the region of Tigray face a growing insurgency fuelled by a series of massacres and other violence targeting civilians.
- The reports says despite government claims of improved security, a series of fierce fighting were reported in Samre, and Adigrat areas, including reports of clashes in central and western Tigray.
- The report said U.S and European officials have been closely following the fighting in Samre. One said a "complex, dynamic and chaotic" contest was under way. The TPLF "got hit pretty hard in the first months and took some time to recover. Now they seem to have rallied," the official said.
- Independent observers and TPLF officials told The Guardian that "Massacres and human rights abuses are motivating many young Tigrayans to take up arms."
- "Tigrayan youth are very angry. Until recently, (the TPLF) couldn't train or arm all of the volunteers that were coming to them. In recent days, they are telling them to come forward again," said a TPLF official.
- An interim official says 100 billion Birr needed to repair destroyed companies of the Endowment Fund for the Rehabilitation of Tigray (EFFORT) in eastern and central Tigray.
- Authorities in Ethiopia's Tigray accused security forces from the neighbouring Amhara region of kicking thousands of Tigrayans off their land in recent days.
- "It's clear that the Amhara regional forces are forcibly removing people of Tigrayan origin from (the western) region," Gebremeskel, chief of staff of Tigray's interim government told AFP.
- "We strongly condemn the forced removal of Tigrayans and it needs to stop immediately," he added.
- Prime Minister Abiy calls for the youth to join the national army and police as Ethiopia has external and internal enemies.
- Experts are warning of the escalating situation between Sudan and Ethiopia. Both countries have clashed repeatedly over different issues over recent months.
- Recent months have seen an influx of forces to the border area. There are also concerning reports that Eritrea is itself being involved in the military buildup. Similarly, recent months have seen a closing of ties between Egypt and Sudan and recently signed a military cooperation agreement.
- The fear is especially that a small spark could lead to an escalating conflict between multiple parties.
- Sudan News Agency (SUNA) says the Ethiopian government has supplied weapons and ammunition to a Sudanese rebel group to attack a border town in the Blue Nile State.
- "The Ethiopian government provided logistical support to Joseph Tuka's forces in the Blue Nile State, including weapons, ammunition and combat equipment," said SUNA.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 09 March)

- An EU delegation is flying to Mekelle, arriving in the morning of 10th March by invitation of the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and will be visiting a hospital and an IDPs camp.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 101 - 11 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation in Tigray (as confirmed per 10 March)

- Tigrayan forces attacked a base near Mekelle (Chomu hill) and destroyed 4 tanks.
- There was fighting near Mekelle between Tigrayan forces and the ENDF.
- AN EU delegation and US Ambassador to Ethiopia visited Mekelle (Tigray) on Wednesday.
- Nine NGOs have written an open letter to the US ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield, asking her to make the Tigray conflict a priority during the US presidency of the UNSC and send a clear message to the Ethiopian government and other actors involved that war crimes will not be accepted.

Reported human rights situation in Tigray(as confirmed per 10 March)

- A 40-year-old rape survivor shared her experience to AFP and she says: "It was like they were fetching water." Ethiopian soldiers would line up outside her cell in a military camp, sometimes as many as 10 men waiting their turn to rape her.
- According to the rape survivor, the group assaults lasted for two weeks, after she was picked up from a street in Mekelle by Ethiopian soldiers.
- "Two nights after the soldiers drove me home, a soldier barged in during the evening curfew and raped me as my three children - aged 11, 7 and 3 - cowered in terror in an adjacent room," she added.
- The rape survivor states that: "I don't feel safe in Tigray anymore. Even the sight of the military uniform frightens me very much. Even now I am shocked, and I am wondering: What did the women of Tigray do to deserve this?" she asks.
- AFP reports says during Ethiopian President Sahle-Work's visit to Mekelle, when soldiers providing security came to inspect the facility before her arrival, rape survivors gathering in the television room cried out in horror, fearing they would be assaulted again.
- "When she (the President) came, we cried, we screamed, we didn't want to talk to her," recalled another rape survivor, who told AFP that Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers raped her for eight days in a military camp after pulling her off a bus near the Tigray town of Wukro. "We never want to talk to her (the president)," she added.
- A women's rights activist, Ms Saba said: "I think the war has already managed to create a breach between the Tigrayan people and the rest of the country. People say they don't feel Ethiopian anymore."
- "With the rapes, it's usually taken as dishonoring Tigrayans, discriminating or showing that Tigrayans don't have any dignity, that they are lower," Ms Saba said.
- Another rape survivor told the AFP that: "She was gang raped by Eritrean soldiers after being abducted from the town of Adigrat and told her they had been ordered to come after the women," she recalled.
- "This is our time. It is time for the Tigrayans to weep," she quoted her assailants as saying, adding she knows there are many more victims who have not been able to reach Mekelle.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as confirmed per 10 March)

- The Ethiopian Deputy Chief of Mission in the United States, Berhane Kidanemariam, has written a post in which he criticizes the Ethiopian government for its handling of the War in Tigray. He said that when PM Abiy came to power he "had big hopes for genuine reforms that could transform our political

environment.” However since then he says the PM has put Ethiopia on a dark path, by arresting journalists, abusing the justice system and “using the military to suppress opposition to his rule.”

- He says that opposition politicians have been arrested on false charges, postponed elections with no cause and deregistering and debarring opposition parties.
- Berhane further accuses the government of stocking ethnic tensions to pursue his agenda, pitting Amhara and Eritreans against Tigrayans, fostering conflict in Oromo, and creating conflict with Sudan.
- He has also said that since the start of Abiy’s tenure there have been an alarming number of assassinations of major political and civic figures”, with perpetrators not being brought to justice. In some cases the assassinations were used to arrest opposition figures.
- The resigning Deputy Chief of Mission said that Abiy has invited both Eritrea and the UAE to fight in Tigray, and invited them to use drones to kill Tigrayans. He said that peace could only come after the government would tell foreign forces to leave Ethiopian territory.
- Berhane stated that infrastructure in Tigray had deliberately been destroyed and that “Hundreds of thousands of people are being displaced, killed, and deliberately starved.”
- Berhane further criticized the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission as a “leaf to the international community” which allows him to pursue “its crimes with impunity”. Instead he called on independent UN investigators to look into the crimes committed in Tigray.
- He calls on the government to release all political prisoners and start a process and start an inclusive process of national dialogue to resolve the problems in the Ethiopian system.
- He finished the message by announcing his resignation from his post and calling on Ethiopians to voice their opposition to the government's policy and start a process of national dialogue and reconciliation.
- Ethiopian Ambassador to Sudan, Yibeltal Amero said Sudan accusing Ethiopia of supplying logistics and ammunition to Sudanese rebels is baseless.
- The Oromo Liberation Front, an Ethiopian opposition party, has officially announced that it will not participate in the coming elections as they do not believe they will be free. It will not participate in an election where the outcome is already “predetermined”. Many of its party leaders and members have been imprisoned.

Reported international situation (as confirmed per 10 March)

- U.S. Secretary of State Blinken described violence in Ethiopia’s Tigray region as “ethnic cleansing” as he pressed for an investigation and the exit of Eritrean troops.
- Blinken told Congress that he wanted the region to see security forces “that will not abuse the human rights of the people of Tigray or commit acts of ethnic cleansing” which we have seen in western Tigray.
- “That has to stop and we also need full accountability”, Blinken said responding to a question from the House of Foreign Affairs Committee.
- “We need to get an independent investigation into what took place there and some kind of process, a reconciliation process so that the country can move forward politically,” he added.
- Blinken states: “We have, as you know, forces from Eritrean over there, and we have forces from an adjoining region, Amhara, that are there. They need to come out.”

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 102 - 12 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation in Tigray (as per 11 March)

- According to sources, over 100 young men civilians were executed in Enkikumel town, between Shire and Endabaguna by Ethiopian and Eritrean forces.
- “Both ENDF and Eritrean forces did door to door searching and hostageing of family members, including children and women, then asking for militias to give up their guns,” said the sources.
- Once the militias came with their weapons, they killed more than 10 of them and shot the hostages.
- One civilian was shot in the Tigray town of Wukro. Public transport was interrupted again.
- According to a witness, Shiraro, a town near to Bademe on the Ethio-Eritrean border was shelled by Eritrean forces on November 10-11, 2020.
- “After the shelling, Eritrean forces controlled the town of Shiraro on Nov. 11, 2020. and there were three groups inside the Eritrean forces,” the witness added.
- The witness says the first group was engaged with looting and loading everything into big Eritrean trucks. The second group was providing security to the town of Shirara, “they were acting like a police” and the third group was fighting with Tigray forces.
- The witness states a few commanders and soldiers of ENDF’s 31 division which were stationed in Wela Nhbi, a place near to Bademe, defected to Eritrea on Nov. 5/2020. The ENDF soldiers took tanks, Zu-23 and some heavy artillery.
- Tigray regional forces were on the western outskirts of Wukro town and fighting has continued.
- AP report says skinny, hungry, fleeing threats of violence, thousands of people who have been hiding in rural areas of Ethiopia’s Tigray region have begun to arrive in the community Shire. 5000 have arrived between last Wednesday and Sunday.
- Holland Doctor Without Borders DG said the people arriving are “in very bad conditions... very exhausted, dehydrated, skinny,” and that “It’s becoming a disparate situation very quickly.”
- The report says people arriving bring an idea of the deprivation gnawing at the Tigray countryside. Aid workers say some describe surviving by eating leaves - or the seeds they had put aside for planting.
- “People are starving,” said Madiha Raza with the International Rescue Committee after visiting Shire. “There is a severe issues of access to food and one interviewee told me she survived on just leaves for a month while she hid in a forest.”
- The removed Tigrayan government has released a statement pleading the international community to take action, but stating that “the ultimate solution against occupation is in the hands of the people of Tigray, and its defence forces”.
- It is important to note that this is the first time the Tigray Government has released an official statement since the ENDF has taken over Mekelle. It shows they are still claiming to be the officially elected government of the state.
- In the statement they claimed that Eritrea is sending more troops to the region and that “Thousands of civilians have been massacred, hundreds of thousands forcibly displaced from their homes, civilian installations and Infrastructures systematically destroyed.”

- When 50 European and American Ambassadors visited Mekelle on Wednesday, citizens stayed at home in protest, leaving the city deserted. The Ambassadors were briefed by the interim administration on the situation. The administration claimed that they controlled 72% of the territory.

Reported international situation (as per 10 March)

- The White House calls for a full, independent investigation into human rights abuses in Tigray. Pres. Biden is “deeply concerned, highly engaged on the issues,” said the Press Secretary.
- U.S Sec. Blinken said that a special envoy will be named for Horn of Africa, saying “ We need a senior person who is going to be focused full-time on the challenges that we are seeing...in a sustained way,” especially Tigray, GERD, and Ethio-Sudan border tensions.
- Asked about the possibility of sending peacekeepers, Blinken answered that foreign forces need to first leave and be replaced “with a force that will not abuse the human rights of the people of Tigray”.
- The UK government envoy to the UN calls for “Sanction” on anyone blocking aid to Tigray.
- “The Security Council must speak out with one voice - against violations of international humanitarian law, including obstruction of humanitarian assistance or access and the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare,” said NorwayUNSC in its statement.
- The statement also says accountability must be ensured and the response to such violations could include imposing targeted sanctions, where relevant and appropriate.
- European Commissioner Janez Lenarčič has suggested that the Commission may sanction individuals who are committing Human Rights violations or obstructing the provisioning of Humanitarian aid.
- The Council of the EU had adopted a conclusion (6902/21) stating that Ethiopia is a strategic partner and reiterated the EUs concern about the situation in Tigray. It is especially concerned by the different testimonies of war crimes and urges all parties to end them immediately.
- German Embassy in Addis, Amb. Auer calls for the withdrawal of Eritrean forces, full humanitarian and media access as well as independent investigation of human rights violations and war crimes after visiting Mekelle, Tigray’s regional capital.
- IMF Director, Kristalina Georgieva says the humanitarian crisis in Tigray region is being closely monitored, asserting that “what is good for the people of Ethiopia is good for the rest of Africa.”
- She said they were concerned, were monitoring the evolution of the situation and stated the importance that “ the price of the crisis is not paid by the suffering of ordinary people,”.
- In a piece for the Frankfurter Rundschau Omid Nouripour, a green German member of Parliament, and Moritz Müller, a candidate for the upcoming elections, have urged the German government to become more actively involved in solving the conflict through dialogue.
- Müller and Nouripour say that the conflict is a conflict between different “bundeslander” (Federal States) with different visions for reform of the country. Failure to act could lead to the disintegration of Ethiopia and the destabilisation of the entire region.
- Ethiopia has rejected Sudan’s proposal (which was endorsed by Egypt recently) to involve the UN, US and EU in the GERD dam negotiations. The Foreign Ministry spokesperson said that Ethiopia believes the problem can be solved through African Union mediation.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 103 - 15 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation in Tigray (as per 14 March)

- Eritrean youths have been taken during razzias in Asmara, as soldiers perform house-to-house searches in the last days. Locals understand that these are sent to Tigray to assist in military action.
- Reported that ENDF soldiers have shot five civilians in Wukro town, three reportedly died. Locals understood this to be a retaliation by ENDF soldiers for attacks by Tigray regional forces. The Prosperity Party administrator (Amahadari) of the Woreda Kilte Awla'ilo, responsible for the area up to Abreha wa Absbiha, was taken by Tigray regional forces.
- The soldiers were randomly shooting at youngsters in the streets. Wukro is in shock and completely deserted. Everyone runs home.
- UNOCHA report says the humanitarian situation in Tigray remains extremely concerning, with conflict continuing to drive displacements of people and reports of some villages completely emptied.
- OCHA states clashes continue to be reported in Central, Eastern, North Western, South Eastern and Southern zones, where social services have reportedly collapsed.
- The report says the vast majority of health centres have been vandalized, destroyed or burned, and many health personnel have not been paid and are reportedly being threatened by armed actors, further delaying their return to work.
- "There is ongoing looting of health facilities, including in Southern Tigray and it is hindering the health response, as partners are discouraged from providing medical supplies. People with chronic diseases and pregnant women are particularly affected," added OCHA report.
- The reports said in Western Tigray tens of thousands of people have been displaced from the area allegedly on ethnic grounds. Since November 2020, Western Tigray has been under control of Amhara forces during which there have been reports of ethnically motivated violence and forced displacement.
- "Attacks on civilians and infrastructure in Central, North Western and South Eastern zones, including house-to-house searches accompanied by indiscriminate, extrajudicial killings and gender-based violence (GBV) remains widespread," said the OCHA report.
- Amdom Gebreselassie, vice head of the public relations bureau and Alula Habteab, head of construction, road and transportation bureau of the provisional interim administration of Tigray have been removed from their office, probably because of statements they made on the problems in Tigray.
- Amdom previously called for an independent investigation into atrocities committed in Tigray and that Amhara and Eritrean soldiers had committed crimes against civilians in Tigray.

- Alula released a briefing detailing the destruction that has taken place in Tigray and said previously that “foreign armies” were causing destruction in Tigray.
- According to Amdom, there is a major disagreement about the fate of Western Tigray. Many in the interim administration want the zones returned to Tigray. They are not administered by Amhara, and there have been many reports of ethnic cleansing taking place there. Amdom claims that others within the Administration want the issue forgotten, due to “pressure from above”.
- Director of Tigray Languages Academy, Dr. Daniel Teklu Reda, has been arrested by the Ethiopian military in Mekelle. No reason for the arrest has been given.
- Researchers at the University of Ghent have published an assessment of the humanitarian situation in Tigray. It includes maps of estimated control of the different parties in the conflict.

Reported international situation (as per 14 March)

- The US has announced that it would not be resuming most of its aid to Ethiopia. While some food and health programmes will receive assistance, most funding for other sectors, including the security sector, remain suspended.
- The Ethiopian government “vehemently opposes” accusations that it has been involved in ethnic cleansing or that ethnic cleansing has taken place in Tigray. It says that it has started an investigation into the claims, and has contacted the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as the African Commission for Human rights.
- US Secretary of State, Blinken, spoke to UN Secretary General Guterres about the need for a permanent ceasefire and a durable political settlement in Tigray.
- A spokesperson of the US State department has confirmed that the statement by Blinken that “ethnic cleansing” took place in Tigray is the official US position.
- The US UN ambassador has said that the international community cannot let the situation in Tigray deteriorate further. She also calls on all sides to stop the fighting.
- Following their visit to Tigray, the European Representation in Ethiopia and the Swedish Embassy in Ethiopia have said that they are concerned about the human rights situation in Tigray.
- The ICRC has reiterated its concern about the situation in Tigray, stating that there is no “visibility” of the situation in rural areas and believe that food supplies are at a critical level.
- It says that it is scaling up operations and has delivered supplies to 8 hospitals in Tigray. It has also provided emergency supplies to 9000 households in Tigray.
- Senior European diplomats have agreed on a list of individuals who will be hit with new sanctions due to Human rights violations. It includes Eritreans. The list, which includes a dozen names from Eritrea, Russia, China, North Korea, Libya, and South Sudan will be put for approval by ministers on 22 March.
- According to diplomatic sources, Ethiopia has recalled Eshetu Dessie, its ambassador to Ireland: “If the Irish government continues its negative role, the Ethiopian government will make a decision to cut diplomatic ties with Ireland and might close its embassy,” said the sources.
- Ethiopians and Eritreans rallied in the U.S and Europe to protest against any intervention in the internal affairs of Ethiopia. They were also thanking Eritrea for supporting the operation in Tigray.

- Tigray Academic diaspora in Europe have signed an open letter saying that the African Union and Ethiopian Human Rights Commission should not head the investigation into the atrocities that have taken place in Tigray. They say that neither organisations have demonstrated independence so far.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 104 - 16 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation in Tigray (as per 15 March)

- Fighting between ENDF allied forces and Tigray regional forces has continued in Northern, South-Eastern and Southern fronts.
- Reports of reinforcement by Eritrean forces, recently 30 trucks loaded with soldiers entered Tigray through Rama town from Eritrea. 16 buses went towards Maykinetal and 14 towards Bizet.
- MSF says health facilities across Ethiopia's Tigray region have been looted, vandalised and destroyed in a deliberate and widespread attack on healthcare.
- "Tigray had one of the best health systems in Ethiopia, with health posts, health centers and hospitals and a functional referral system with ambulances," said MSF. "Now this health system has almost completely collapsed."
- MSF states, of the 106 health facilities visited between mid-Dec, 2020 and early March 2021, nearly 70% had been looted, more than 30% had been damaged and only 13% were functioning normally.
- "In some health facilities across Tigray, the looting has continued. And in most areas appear to have been deliberately vandalized to make them nonfunctional," said MSF. "In many health centers, such as in Debre Abay and May Kuhli, MSF teams found destroyed equipment, smashed doors and windows, and medicine and patient files scattered across floors."
- MSF says in Adwa hospital in central Tigray, medical equipment, including ultrasound machines and monitors, had been deliberately smashed. And the health facility in Semema was reportedly looted twice by soldiers before being set on fire, while the health center in Sebeya was hit by rockets, destroying the delivery room.
- The MSF report states every fifth health facility visited was occupied by soldiers. In some instances, this was temporary; in others the armed occupation continues. In Muglat, east Tigray, Eritrean soldiers are still using the health facility as their base and the hospital in Abi Addi in central Tigray, which serves a population of half a million, was occupied by Ethiopian forces until early March.
- "The army used Abiy Addi hospital as a military base and to stabilise their injured soldiers," says Kate Nolan, MSF emergency coordinator. "During that time, it was not accessible to the general population."
- DG of MSF, Oliver Behn says the attacks on Tigray's health facilities are having a devastating impact on people; health facilities and health staff need to be protected during a conflict, in accordance with international humanitarian law, but this is clearly not happening in Tigray.
- MSF says few health facilities in Tigray now have ambulances and most of them have been seized by armed groups. In Adigrat, for example, some 20 ambulances were taken and later seen being used by soldiers near the Eritrean border, to transport goods.
- "The referral system in Tigray for transporting sick patients is almost non-existent. Patients travel long distances and many health facilities have few or no remaining staff," said MSF. "Some fled in fear and others no longer come to work because they have not been paid in months."
- MSF says staff conducting mobile clinics in rural Tigray hear that women died in childbirth because they were unable to get to a hospital due to the lack of ambulances, rampant insecurity on the roads and night-time curfews. In the last four months, few women received antenatal or postnatal services and people with chronic diseases are going without lifesaving drugs.

- "The health system needs to be restored as soon as possible," says Behn. "Health facilities need to be rehabilitated and receive more supplies, and staff need to receive salaries and work in a safe environment."
- MSF urges services to be restored as soon as possible and for all armed groups in the area to respect medical facilities.
- Der Spiegel has interviewed a Tigrayan doctor who has fled to Sudan. The doctor says that he was a supporter of Abiy, but increasingly felt ostracised for being Tigrayan. When the war started, he fled. He says that the Ethiopian army is using starvation as a weapon. He also keeps a book of all the massacres he has heard of.
- Another Tigrayan man from Adigrat says that he was captured by Eritrean soldiers, who forced him to go from factory to factory to dismantle machinery, and take other valuables and load them into trucks. After two weeks, when he refused to continue, Eritreans tortured him and chained him up.
- The doctor also treated a man, who was beaten by Amhara militia until he lost his eyesight.
- He managed to escape, and went south, but ran into Amharic militia who forced him back into Central Tigray. He says he counted 51 bodies to where he was deported.
- He tried to reach Sudan a second time, crossing Western Tigray. He says that he passed through abandoned villages and encountered almost no Tigrayans, only "amharic speaking" people.
- When he tried to cross the border, he was shot at by the ENDF and Amhara militias. He says few refugees manage to reach Sudan.

Reported situation in the Horn region (as per 15 March)

- Sudan's Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation, Yaser Abbas, said his country will defend its interests by all legitimate means should the GERD negotiations fail.
- "Ethiopia is mistakenly believing that an agreement to fill and operate the dam would restrict its use of the Nile water in the future, while Sudan and Egypt affirmed their respect for Ethiopia's right to develop the use of its water resources in the future in accordance with the principles of international law," said Abbas.
- The Sudanese minister said Ethiopia is trying to include the water-sharing file in the negotiations on the mega-dam and absence of political will, lies behind the failure to reach an agreement on the dam.

Reported international situation (as per 15 March)

- Sudan has formally requested the AU, EU, US and UN to mediate the stalled process over the filling and operation of the GERD.
- The former US Assistant Secretary for African affairs during the Bush Administration, Jendayi Frazer, and the Africa program Director of the CSIS, Judd Devermont, have argued in an opinion piece that the conflict in Tigray threatens US interests. Ethiopia has been the "linchpin" for regional stability. If that were to disappear, there could be grave consequences for the international community.
- They argue that the US should increase pressure on Ethiopia and Eritrea through sanctions, consensus building, and stopping debt relief. The US should also not hesitate to "expend political capital" to make countries such as Saudi Arabia, China, and the UAE act on the issue.
- DG of WHO says in Syria, Myanmar, Yemen and Tigray millions have been denied access to essential health services, where health facilities have been destroyed and health workers have been attacked and intimidated and this must stop.

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<https://www.msf.org/health-facilities-targeted-tigray-region-ethiopia>
<https://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/542145-fighting-in-ethiopia-threatens-us-security-interests>
<https://www.spiegel.de/international/world/chronicler-of-horrors-an-ethiopian-doctor-records-the-destruction-of-his-homeland-a-ba9139d0-d443-4dde-9458-cd18dc38cae1#ref=rss>
<https://africanarguments.org/2021/03/tigray-why-are-soldiers-attacking-religious-heritage-sites/>

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 105 - 17 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation in Tigray (as per 16 March)

- Tigray interim regional administration women's bureau said more than 500 women have been raped in Mekelle, Adigrat and its environs between December and February alone.
- According to the bureau, most of the women were raped by Eritrean and Ethiopian soldiers.
- Tigray regional interim administration's communication bureau called on women around the world to condemn the act and bring the perpetrators to justice.
- Sources say Ayder referral hospital in Mekelle is admitting hundreds of fresh rape cases since yesterday.
- The head of the task force to respond to the Tigray war, General Yohannes, has told diplomats that it was "a dirty war" and was affecting everyone, especially the defenceless.
- General Yohannes also said that it was unlikely that atrocities have not happened in Tigray. He further said that he did not see how a military approach alone would end the conflict. "I know very few and exceptional conflicts or violence...or fighting, let me say... that have ended only by gun. Very few," Yohannes said.
- The General said other "mechanisms" would need to be considered, potentially including negotiations and calls for a ceasefire. However, he didn't mention a specific proposal. "I believe this is the way out. I don't think we will escape this process," Yohannes added.
- The spokesperson for the Amhara regional government said that Amhara is taking control of 10 semi-autonomous areas in Western Tigray. They expect the decision to be ratified shortly by the House of Federation.
- The head of the interim administration in Tigray has protested and said that Amhara militias need to leave Tigray immediately, stop committing atrocities, and stop occupying land.
- There have been reports, including from the US government, that ethnic cleansing is taking place in Western Tigray. Ethnic Tigrayans are being forced to leave their homes, and killed if they refuse.
- According to TMH, a jet fighter was shot down in Southern Tigray.
- AFP reported that the conflict in Tigray is intensifying. People the agency spoke to, say that abuses by Ethiopian soldiers "fuel a steady flow of civilian casualties" and stoke anger towards Abiy.
- The Agency has also reported multiple massacres that occurred in Wukro over the last few months. Eritrean soldiers routinely passed through the town, plundering and killing people. By Early December 81 had already been killed in the town. 18 more have been killed in a recent massacre by Ethiopian soldiers, also killing children.
- In another incident, AFP reported that Eritrean soldiers opened fire on civilians in Agula, after a Tigrayan attack.

- At the start of the conflict, the hospital in Wukro was shelled, destroying 75% of the hospital's facilities. As a result, many people have had to wait for months to receive treatment. The hospital has reopened, operating at a limited capacity. Newly wounded people continue to arrive.
- The Addis Standard reported that tensions are starting to run high with Oromo refugees. Many were forced out of their homes in Ethiopian Somaliland, and had been promised to be resettled. This however has not happened.
- The Oromo refugees say that instead they have found themselves in a situation where aid is not being provided by the government, but there are no jobs either. Children are also reportedly being given inferior education. The refugees say that they have been forgotten. Tensions are building up between them and the local population. Integration has, as a result, become difficult.

Reported situation in the Horn region (as per 16 March)

- The Africa Institute for Security Studies (ISS) published an article on the conflict between Somalia and Kenya, threatening the stability in the Horn region. Both countries have a maritime boundary disagreement, which has intensified over the last months. Somalia has cut diplomatic ties with Kenya.
- The ISS warns that a conflict could pit different countries in the region against each other, especially as there are already several conflicts in the region. Somalia has recently received support from Ethiopia and Eritrea. Sudan, and Egypt are at odds with Ethiopia over the GERD, and Sudan has repeatedly clashed with Ethiopia over its own border conflict in Al-fashada.
- It says that IGAD is too weak and distracted to effectively tackle to Somali-Kenyan conflict. International actors, and the AU especially need to step up and take robust action to avoid conflict. The AU also needs to take up a greater role in the Horn.
- The UN special envoy to Sudan, Volker Perthes, has said that he is deeply concerned about the evolving situation between Sudan and Ethiopia. Both sides have built up their military forces on the border and have clashed repeatedly over the disputed area. The Special Envoy said that the increase in activity has created a “serious risk for miscalculation and escalation”.
- He calls on Ethiopia and Sudan to de-escalate and come to a peaceful resolution.
- Perthes also warned about the deteriorating economic situation in Sudan. The country has seen an inflation of 304% in January, and has high unemployment and poverty rates. He said that 13 million Sudanese, a quarter of the population, is projected to soon require humanitarian aid.
- IGAD has said that it will continue to work closely with Ethiopia to ensure stability in the region.

Reported international situation (as per 16 March)

- Dominic Raab, the UK Foreign Minister, has said that the UK has communicated to the Ethiopian government the importance of unfettered access to Tigray. He is also worried that the improvements that have been made in Ethiopia in the last three decades are in danger of being lost.
- Raab also said that it is important to galvanise the international community to take action on Tigray.
- Asked about Sudan’s request to be involved in the GERD negotiations, a US spokesperson said that “We continue to support collaborative and constructive efforts to resolve the disagreement on the GERD.” and encourage the “resumption of a productive dialogue”.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 106 - 18 March 2021

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Reported war situation in Tigray (as per 17 March)

- Sky News report states the breadth and depth of human suffering in Ethiopia's Tigray region is perfectly clear to humanitarian workers, human rights groups and the international diplomatic community.
- The report says humanitarian organizations have complained publicly about the failure of the Ethiopian government to allow their team full access in Tigray. "I would say we have access to about 30% to 40% but there are large areas we can't get to," said a humanitarian worker.
- According to the report the federal government may not have the ability - or the authority - to offer access to parts of the country (region) that it simply does not control.
- Sky News is the first broadcast journalist to travel South of Mekelle, Tigray's regional capital and says Ethiopian and Eritrean troops were seen patrolling roadside towns.
- A Sky news crew stopped at the outskirts of a village called Mayweini and local residents told the crews that they were standing next to a shallow grave. "There are two (men) buried here, the rest we took and buried at the church," said a man named Hadush.
- In the village of Mayweini, there was a massacre on the 23rd of February, 2021. "More than 80 civilian residents were murdered in the village by Eritrean troops," said Hadush.
- Another resident of the village said Eritrean troops killed dozens, including a 13 years old boy. "Yes they killed a 13-year-old kid. They told the kid to come and the kid went to the soldiers. They (soldiers) killed him by shooting in the head, I saw it with my eyes," said the resident.
- The residents also said the soldiers made them wait for three days before they could collect the bodies to be buried and some had disappeared.
- "There are a lot of people who died but their bodies were eaten by hyenas... after a week we found only bits of clothing. We identified them by the clothes they were wearing," said Letemeskel.
- According to the residents, the massacre in Mayweini village was an act of revenge after government aligned forces had lost a battle to the Tigray regional forces in a nearby village called Cheli.
- The Sky news reporter continued to the village of Cheli and met with family members who lost their loved ones. "Yes, there was a battle. It was on the day of St. Selassie, on the 7 February (15 February in the western calendar)," said Hagos Beyene.
- According to the residents of the village (Cheli), ENDF allied forces and Tigray regional forces clashed here on the 15 February. The following week, on 23 February, a mix of Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers returned, accusing locals of supporting the enemy.
- "Oh, they murdered a lot, of course we haven't counted them all. When they found people in their houses they killed them. We escaped but many died," said Hilften Hagos, Mr Beyene's 15-year-old daughter.
- Another 25-year-old resident named Haile Selassie Kiros told Sky news that his two brothers had been shot. "From every house two, three, four (people) have died. There are many who are missing and we can't find them."
- A woman named Shashie in the village of Cheli told Sky news how her husband was killed. "On the day of 15 February we all ran away but my husband wanted to stay at home. I asked him to come but he said he wanted to stay with the animals. They burnt the house and our food. Then they killed him."
- According to the villagers of Cheli, more than 180 civilians were killed by Ethiopian and Eritrean forces.

- “We don’t know what the situation is in the rural parts of Tigray region and what we don’t know really worries us,” told a senior UN official to Sky News.
- A German news crew from ZDF reported from Mekelle, Aksum and Shire in Tigray. The German crew were the first foreign journalists to reach Aksum since the start of the war.
- The ZDF crew spoke with a woman in a hospital who had been sexually assaulted by Eritrean soldiers. The doctor of the clinic says that more women are looking for help: “They are traumatized, physically and psychologically.”
- ZDF shows images of graves in Aksum of victims killed in their houses and on the streets during the Aksum massacre. ZDF spoke to witnesses of the massacre and surviving family members of victims.
- ZDF shows masses of refugees in Shire, many living without shelter. Witnesses explain that they have been driven from their houses, and family members have been killed by Eritrean soldiers.
- USAID chief, Samantha Power, says the humanitarian situation in the Tigray region remains critical.
- “MSF’s finding that most hospitals and clinics are damaged, looted, and deliberately vandalized to make them non-functional is reprehensible and has happened to almost 90% of the region’s health centers,” she added.

Reported situation in the Horn region (as per 17 March)

- According to Al-Arabiya, Al-Burhan, Chairman of the Sovereignty Council of Sudan, has demanded the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces from all Sudanese territory.
- SPLM-North Vice Chairman Joseph Tuka has denied reports claiming he had received military support from Ethiopia to carry out an attack on a border town in Blue Nile State.
- Ethiopian News Agency reports Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen’s remarks at a GERD Dam symposium in Addis Ababa. He stated that Ethiopia will not be stopped from exercising its right of using the Nile River for its development.
- Ethiopian Minister of Water, Irrigation and Energy, Seleshi Bekele, stated that the second phase of filling the GERD dam will commence in the upcoming rainy season.
- Sudanese media SUNA News reports that refugees continue to flee Ethiopia to Sudan despite the strict border control between the two countries. UNHCR is stated to have reported that 75.000 refugees have entered Sudan since November, counting only those that crossed official checkpoints.

Reported international situation (as per 17 March)

- The UK government’s Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office states that the UK has been “consistent, alongside the UN and international partners including the US, in calling for the protection of civilians in Ethiopia, respect for human rights and the withdrawal of Eritrean forces.”
- In addition, “The Foreign Secretary raised the need for independent, international, investigations into allegations of human right abuses and violations when he met with Prime Minister Abiy during his visit to Ethiopia on 22 January.”
- Today, 18 March, the UK Parliament’s International Development Committee will hold a formal meeting, an oral evidence session, on the humanitarian crisis in the Tigray region.
- Former UK MP and former international development minister Sally Keeble states that despite early warnings that the conflict in Tigray is “of a different order”, the world is “standing by, allowing a genocide to unfold in Tigray, Ethiopia.”

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Links of interest

<https://committees.parliament.uk/event/4024/formal-meeting-oral-evidence-session/>

<https://www.zdf.de/nachrichten/zdf-mittagsmagazin/zdf-mittagsmagazin-vom-16-maerz-2021-100.html>

<https://news.sky.com/story/ethiopia-hundreds-executed-thousands-homeless-the-human-cost-of-fighting-in-tigray-12247307>

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 107 - 19 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported war situation in Tigray (as per 18 March)

- The UN Human rights chief, Michelle Bachelet, has agreed to the Ethiopian request to conduct a joint investigation in Tigray. The UN and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission are establishing an investigation plan.
- A twitter campaign voiced opposition and strong reservations, stating that the international community should carry out independent investigations.
- Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) says famined children and pregnant women are among the 37,000 displaced people that have arrived in Sheraro, northwestern Tigray, over the last few weeks.
- "The situation in Sheraro is beyond dire. Despite families arriving every day, no aid has been delivered for weeks. Food, water and medicine are running out fast. People could die unless they get humanitarian aid now," the NRC Chief, Jan Egeland, warned.
- He also said: "People have told us that they fled sexual violence, killings and widespread violence in Tigray, only to arrive in Sheraro and find a desperately helpless situation."
- The NRC report has shared stories and evidence of elevated levels of malnutrition among displaced people. Egeland further elaborated that they have heard many accounts of refugees hiding in remote villages. These people, afraid to be found, are at risk of being cut off from any assistance.
- The report also says that pregnant women are forced to sleep on the ground in overcrowded classrooms with no sleeping mats, blankets or mosquito nets, putting them at serious risk of malaria. Many lactating mothers have also told the NRC that they are unable to produce milk for their babies.
- NRC teams were the first to visit destroyed Hitsats and Shimelba camps. Prior to the conflict, the camps hosted close to 33,000 Eritrean refugees. While the team did not find any refugees, there were 3,000 internally displaced people that fled from Western Tigray who had taken refuge in the shelters meant for refugees in Shimelba camp.
- "The situation in Sheraro is only the tip of the iceberg, as people in countless more hard-to-reach areas in Tigray are also in desperate need. We urge Ethiopian authorities to do all they can to ensure aid reaches everyone who needs it, regardless of where they are," said Egeland.
- The SG of NRC stated that: "there cannot be any sustained response if the conflict rages on. Beyond meeting immediate needs. people need help to restore their livelihood, get their children back to school and return home when it is safe."
- He also called on all warring parties to find solutions that will restore lasting peace and give people a chance to rebuild their lives.
- Three Tigray opposition parties have written an open letter to Moussa Faki Mahamat, stating that the AU does not have the capacity, nor the political independence to properly investigate the events that have unfolded in Tigray. They further argue that as the investigation will happen in collaboration with Ethiopia, the Ethiopian government will attempt to use the AU investigation to cover up crimes.
- They urge the AU to support a full international investigation.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as per 18 March)

- OLF is advancing to Addis and the Prosperity Party concluded this week that this is dangerous and they may have to bring back some of their forces from Tigray.

- OLF now controls 13 woredas in Western Shoa zone and is now Muger, 70 kms west of Addis Ababa.

Reported situation in the Horn region (as per 18 March)

- The Egypt Foreign minister has said that Egypt rejected the recent Ethiopian decision which threatens Egyptian and Sudanese interests downstream of the GERD dam. He also accused Ethiopia of trying to impose a “fait accompli” on both downstream countries. He further warned that such unilateral measures could be destabilising for the region.
- Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, head of Sudan Sovereign Council, said the Ethiopian government must recognize the border treaty of 1902 with Sudan, before negotiations can start. He rejects Ethiopia's claim on the Al-Fashaga area, as the border has been demarcated since 1902.
- Al-Burhan stated that Ethiopia has deployed additional troops inside Sudan. "This escalation is an act of hostility against the country," he stressed before calling for the withdrawal of the Ethiopian troops.
- "Our relations with our neighbours are based on mutual respect, understanding and trust. Also, we seek to solve all our problems by peaceful and friendly means," he added.

Reported international situation (as per 18 March)

- The white house is sending US senator Christopher Coons to Addis Ababa. He will meet with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to convey President Biden's concern about the situation in Tigray.
- Cameron Hudson, senior fellow with the Atlantic Council's Africa Center and a former US official said Mr Coon's trip will give more urgency to Mr Blinken's “serious messages” to Mr Abiy Ahmed.
- “Senator Coons can signal that time is running out for Ethiopia to change the course in Tigray before the US is forced into a more aggressive policy posturing punitive measures,” Mr Hudson added.
- US Sec. of State Blinken said in a press statement that the US is providing an additional nearly \$52 million in assistance to respond to the humanitarian crisis in Ethiopia's Tigray region. The US has provided a total of nearly \$153 million in humanitarian assistance since the crisis began.
- “We remain gravely concerned about the worsening humanitarian crisis in Tigray. The international community must follow-through on all commitments, including lifting restrictions on import and use of communication equipment and providing extended visas for humanitarian workers,” it stated.
- The press statement calls for immediate, full, safe and unhindered access for humanitarian organizations and workers to provide timely and needed assistance to those affected by the conflict.
- Gregory W. Meeks, Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and Michael McCaul, Ranking Member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee said in a statement that: “We are deeply concerned about reports of war crimes against civilians, forced displacements, restricted access to food and healthcare, and the role of Eritrean forces in Ethiopia's Tigray region.
- The statement urged for an international, independent investigation of all reported atrocities, including ethnic cleansing. In the statement, the senators called for the US, in coordination with partners and allies to take action to hold perpetrators of human rights abuses accountable.
- “We strongly urge the Ethiopian government to make more progress on granting full access to humanitarian partners, independent media, diplomats and human rights monitors to aid civilians and to assess the impact of the conflict in Tigray,” said the statement.
- The statement recognizes Ethiopia's role in the Horn region, and warns the ongoing conflict in Tigray threatens the credibility of the upcoming elections in June and the stability of the entire region.

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<https://www.nrc.no/news/2021/march/ethiopia-hunger-and-disease-rife-among-displaced-as-aid-workers-gain-access-to-new-parts-of-tigray/>

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 108 - 22 March 2021

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Reported Sexual Violence in Tigray (as per 21 March)

- Report published by CNN says more evidence has emerged that shows sexual violence being used as deliberate weapon of war in Ethiopia's Tigray region.
- The CNN report states that women are being gang-raped, drugged and held hostage, according to medical records and testimonies from survivors.
- According to doctors who spoke CNN, almost all the women they treat recount similar stories of being raped by Ethiopian and Eritrean troops. And the women said the troops were on a self-proclaimed mission of retribution and were operating with near-total impunity in the Tigray region.
- CNN has spoken with several women in Hamdayet, Sudan who describe being raped as they fled fighting in Tigray. "He pushed me and said you Tigrayans have no history, you have no culture. I can do what I want to you and no one cares," a woman said of her attacker. She is now pregnant.
- "Many say that they were raped by Amhara forces who told them they were intent on ethnically cleansing Tigray," a doctor working at Hamdayet refugee camp told CNN.
- "The women that have been raped say that the things that they say to them when they were raping them is that they need to change their identity - to either Amharize them or at least leave their Tigrayan status - and that they've come there to cleanse them - to cleanse the blood line," said Dr. Tedros Tefera. "Practically this has been a genocide," he added.
- Channel 4 News has published a harrowing report into sexual violence against women in Tigray. One of the survivors told Channel 4 News that she and five other women were gang-raped by 30 Eritrean soldiers who were joking and taking photos throughout the attack.
- "She knew they were Eritrean troops because of their dialect and uniforms. She was able to return home, only to be raped again," she said. "When she tried to escape, she recalled being captured, injected with a drug, tied to a rock, stripped, stabbed and raped by soldiers for 10 days," she added.
- According to Channel 4, many more women and young girls are being treated in Ayder referral Hospital and many has been referred there by hospitals in rural areas that are not equipped to handle rape cases.
- CNN report says more than 200 women had been admitted to the hospital for sexual violence in recent months, but many cases have been reported in rural areas with limited to no access to medical care.
- A coordinator at a gender-based violence crisis center in Tigray said they used to hear cases every few days or once a week. Since the conflict, up to 22 women and girls seek treatment for rape every day.
- "Demand for emergency contraception and testing for sexually transmitted infections have surged in recent months. Many of the women who have been raped have contracted sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV," doctors told CNN.
- A doctor said: "Many of the women she treated were physically abused, with broken bones and bruised body parts. And the youngest girl she treated was 8 years old, while the oldest was 60."
- The French Newspaper Liberation has also published accounts of rapes from people in Adigrat and Mekelle. It tells how many women have been raped multiple times, some for extended periods of time. In one case, a husband had to pay a ransom to Eritrean soldiers to get his wife back.
- One woman was kidnapped by Eritrean soldiers, forced onto a bus, and sent to the countryside. There she found herself isolated, together with 30 other women, being gang-raped and beaten every day. When she asked to see her child, the Eritrean soldiers executed him in front of her.

Reported War Situation in Tigray (as per 21 March)

- Fighting between ENDF allied forces and Tigray forces has continued in South-Eastern Tigray.
- Fires within a settlement have been detected for the third day in a row in Humera, western Tigray. The location falls within an active area of conflict.
- In the fight between the Eritrean troops and Tigray defense forces, over 17 vehicles of the 29th division loaded with Eritrean troops were ambushed and burnt in Hintalo district, Dengolat sub-district.
- Commanders of the 29th division of Eritrean forces have been reportedly killed near Samre district.
- Eritrean forces have destroyed Maryam Dengolat's Church, near Samre using heavy artillery.
- The Prime Minister of Ethiopia office has released a communique giving a final notice to TPLF leaders to surrender. It continued saying that TPLF officials should do this to prevent "misery to their people".
- In an interview, an ENDF's General said that he was in Ba'eker near Humera, western Tigray and had instructed Battalions in secret which before the war in Tigray started on Nov. 4/2020.
- "We prepared the tanks and bullets for the war and alerted our allies in the Northern Command. We were ahead of them (Tigray)," said the General.
- The LA times reported of a massacre that took place on January 8th in Bora. Ethiopian soldiers went from house to house, killing a 160 people.
- There is a lot of anxiety in Mekelle. The New York times reported that the city is uneasy, all while many refugees and wounded come through the city. The population also feels targeted by the ENDF, afraid of displeasing them. According to one NYT story, a man was followed home by four soldiers and beaten to death after a "heated argument in a bar".
- Ayder Referral hospital in Mekelle says that they have received 250 bodies since november 28th. They say that most appear to have been killed by government soldiers.
- The NYT reported that when journalists were briefly allowed in the city in February, many people rushed to see them to tell stories of atrocities.
- They also spoke to Mai Kadra refugees, who claim that the massacre was carried out by Fano, an Amhara militia. According to these refugees, most victims are Tigrayan.
- The Ethiopian deputy head of Mission in the US, who quit early this month, is calling for peace negotiation.
- He further said that the TPLF was entrenching itself, and becoming more capable at defending itself.

Reported situation in the Horn region (as per 21 March)

- Ethiopia said the proposal to involve an international Quartet in GERD negotiations will only prolong the duration of the dam's second filling and suggested the proposal was a distraction.

Reported international situation (as per 18 March)

- Former Liberian President Sirleaf has commended President Biden for sending Senator Coons to Ethiopia in relation to the war in Tigray. She was one of the dignitaries appointed by the AU to mediate the conflict at the beginning of the crisis.
- The US Ambassador to Ethiopia will be travelling to Mekelle, Tigray region on 22/03/2021.
- US president Biden has held a virtual meeting with the UNSC permanent representatives to discuss US re-engagement and priorities and has urged action on a variety of issues, including on Tigray.

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Links of interest

<https://www.channel4.com/news/the-horrors-of-the-hidden-war-inside-the-tigray-conflict-in-ethiopia>
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<https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2021-03-19/ethiopia-tigray-war-massacre-bora>
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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 109 - 23 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported War Situation in Tigray (as per 22 March)

- Fierce fighting between Eritrean soldiers and Tigray forces in Hintalo-district has continued today.
- Reported that infantry divisions of 21st, 27th, 31st, 53rd and 59th as well as 49th mechanized and 524th motorized divisions of the Eritrean army are participating in the in South-eastern front in Tigray.
- Commanders of the 49th, 524th and 27th mechanized, motorized and infantry divisions of Eritrean forces have been reportedly killed in the fight against Tigray forces.
- In the previous EEPA report we mistakenly identified the 17 vehicles that were ambushed and destroyed as part of the 29th division. It is in fact the 27th.
- Tigray Media House (TMH) reported that a battalion of Amhara forces have been reportedly destroyed in Tsata town, Waghimra Zone, inside Amhara regional state.
- The Catholics of Tigray have written a letter to Pope Francis about the involvement of Cardinal Berhaneyesus Sourafel in the Tigray crisis.
- The Addis Standard report says an unknown number of people have been killed in ongoing violence in Oromia special zone and Northern Shewa zone, Amhara regional state.
- According to the report, the conflict was first reported on March 19, 2021 and the violence saw the burning down of religious institutions.
- North Shewa Zone, Peace and Security burera head, Abera Mokenen said: "A mosque and a church have been burned down in Ataye town as a result of the violence and investigations are ongoing."
- Sisay Damte, the head of Peace and Security of the Amhara regional state explained that the violence broke out after the shooting of an individual and he didn't specify the nature of the attack, but went on saying the attack was carried out by an unspecified armed group.
- However, Hassen Hadiya, a resident of Kemise who spoke to Addis Standard says the violence started after Amhara Special police shot an individual in front of the grand mosque in Ataye after night prayers.
- According to Kush Media Network (KMN), Eritrean troops have been allegedly involved in the ongoing conflict in Oromia Special Zone. The Identification card of an Eritrean soldier who was reportedly killed in the fight was found and posted.
- The OLF has announced that Batte Urgessa, OLF's PR bureau head and his driver Wondosen Abdulkadir were arrested by Burayu police, Oromia Regional State. Batte was arrested while visiting colleagues detained at Burayu police station.
- Addis Ababa Police says anti-peace forces are disseminating unfounded information alleging an impending inter-ethnic and inter-religious attacks on residents of the city.
- The OLF claims that Amhara militias are attacking civilians in the Amhara Regional State and Oromia Special Administrative Zone.
- Tigray Interim Administration head, Mulu Nega, said the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in Tigray has reached more than 900,000 and most of them are from western Tigray. This is a decrease

from previous reports from early January, when the Interim Administration estimated the number of IDPs at 2.2 million or more. (Situation report 46).

- In a new OCHA report published on Monday, the organisation said that 12 healthcare facilities were looted by “armed actors” in the two weeks preceding March 12th.
- They further say that there continues to be acute levels of malnutrition across Tigray.
- OCHA also says that the number of displaced people is still rising. They estimate that a thousand people are arriving in Shire every day. Most of those arriving are fleeing from Western Tigray. Another 107 thousand have arrived in Adwa since the start of the conflict.
- The influx of refugees from Western Tigray is overwhelming the healthcare capacity in the rest of the region.
- At least a 140 thousand have been displaced from Western Tigray. Their partners are indicating that “several major towns are now empty of Tigrayan people, with new residents occupying vacated houses.” Access to the region is only possible through Amhara.
- It estimates that Gender Based Violence (GBV) is high, with at least 516 self-reported case of rape as of March 12th.
- The presence of Ethiopian troops is posing “huge challenges in the health response.” Abi Adi hospital, just West of Mekelle, has been occupied by Eritrean troops after being vacated by the ENDF.
- 1.3 million children need services and education.

Reported international situation (as per 22 March)

- The European Union has imposed sanctions on the Eritrean Head of the National Security Office Abraha Kassa. The NSO is responsible for serious Human Rights violations, including extrajudicial killings, kidnappings, forced labour and torture.
- Eritrea’s Ministry of Information said it rejects the offensive and counterproductive resolution adopted by the EU Council of Ministers against it.
- The statement by the Ministry of Information says the EU has no legal or moral prerogative for its decision and has merely invoked trumped-up charges to harass Eritrea for other ulterior motives.
- FP says the Biden Administration is expected to tap a former U.N official to be the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, a new role aimed at tackling the crisis in Ethiopia and instability in the broader region.
- Jeffrey Feltman, the former top political advisor to the U.N. SG, has been offered the newly created post, according to several people familiar with the matter, though they cautioned that the appointment has not been finalized.
- Finland’s Foreign Minister, Pekka Haavisto said: “I am ready to continue outreach and travel to Ethiopia and the region within a few weeks with renewed EU mandate. It is important to continue dialogue on cessation of hostilities, unhindered humanitarian access and human rights investigations.”

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 110 - 24 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported War Situation in Tigray (as per 23 March)

- Fierce fighting between ENDF allied forces and Tigray forces was reported today near Negash district, Eastern Zone of Tigray.
- Reports of dozens of civilians who were allegedly killed by Eritrean and Ethiopian soldiers in Teka Tesfay village, Eastern Tigray.
- New sources from Asmara, Eritrea, report razzias, as attempts to send more troops to Tigray.
- A meeting took place on 19 March 2021 09:00am in the Mai Ayini refugee camp. The meeting was scheduled for the 17th but had to be postponed due to security issues.
- The meeting was held by the Administration Ethiopian of Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA) and UNHCR with a selected group of refugees originally from the Hitsats and Shimelba camps, which have been destroyed and left empty. The meeting was about their change of location. The relocation process is only available for refugees who came from Shimelba and Hitsats camps.
- The Oromo Prosperity Party (OPP) acknowledged the occurrence of violence in Oromia Special Zone in the Amhara Regional State and blamed the Amhara Regional State for the attacks.
- The party has condemned the attacks against Oromo civilians and demanded that perpetrators whom they identified as being members of the Amhara Regional State Special Forces be brought to justice.
- "The OPP have identified that extremist elements within the Amhara Regional State leadership are engaged in conspiracy to harm the solidarity the Oromo and Amhara people enjoy," said OPP.
- During the 11th regular session of the Ethiopian parliament, Mohammed Hassan, a Member of Parliament asked about the conflict in Wollo and suggested that the attacks were carried out by Amhara special forces on the Oromo community.
- "The attacks are ethnically and religiously motivated against the Oromo community using OLF/Shane as a pretext. Amhara political forces are holding Wollo Oromos as a hostage to secure their interest in Oromia regional state," said the MP.
- The UN has said that there continues to be a massive displacement of people, with at least a 140 thousand new arrivals.
- They also say that the new Ethiopian government sharing mechanism for movement of cargo and workers has allowed for an increase in presence and operations. The situation remains dire.

Prime Ministers Abiy's Speech to Parliament

- Ethiopian Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed, admitted that troops from neighbouring Eritrea were present in the conflict-torn Tigray region and suggested they may have been involved in abuses against civilians.
- In his speech to the Ethiopian parliament, Abiy thanked the Eritrean people and government for a lasting favour they did to the Ethiopian soldiers during the conflict, without giving details. "After the Eritrean army crossed the border and was operating in Ethiopia, any damage it did to our people was unacceptable," he said.
- "We don't accept any damage because it is the Eritrean army, and we would not accept it if it were our soldiers. The military campaign was against our clearly targeted enemies, not against the people. We have discussed this four or five times with the Eritrean government," he added.

- The PM said according to the Eritrean government, its soldiers had taken over trenches on the border. "Eritrea told us it had national security issues and as a result had seized areas on the border but had vowed to leave if Ethiopian soldiers returned to the trenches," he added.
- Abiy also said the Ethiopian government had raised accusations of widespread looting and rights abuses by Eritrean soldiers in Tigray. "The Eritrean government has highly condemned it and said they will be accountable if any of their army participated in this," he added.
- In his speech Abiy accused Amnesty, the United Nations and other agencies of being "part of the TPLF family."
- The PM also admitted there had been abuses and atrocities and said the perpetrators would be held accountable.
- During the same speech, the PM compared the rape of girls and women by Eritrean and Ethiopian troops to TPLF's attack on the ENDF Northern Command base.
- Speaking in Amharic, the Prime stated that "those who are complaining about the rights of raped women in Tigray, they should know that those women (Tigrayan women) were raped by men but our soldiers in the Northern command were attacked by daggers and nobody talks about them (the soldiers). Northern Command was not only attacked but also humiliated."
- The PM also dismissed fears of imminent conflict with Sudan. "Sudan in its current state isn't in shape to fight with a neighbouring country, it has lots of problems. Ethiopia also has many problems. We don't need war. It is better to settle it in a peaceful manner," he added.

Reported international situation (as per 23 March)

- The US ambassador to the UN, has said that they were concerned about reports that "many forces operating in Tigray are committing crimes in Axum."
- The EU high representative for Foreign Affairs, Borrell, has said that they were ready to "activate all our foreign policy tools" against those that are committing human rights abuses.
- He says the EU wants 1. full humanitarian access to the region, 2. an independent investigation, 3. Eritrean troops to be withdrawn.
- Cameron Hudson of the Atlantic Council Africa Center, has argued that Ethiopia should learn from Sudan regarding the conflict in Tigray. He says that the current situation has many similarities to the way Bashir handled the conflict in Darfur. The conflict in Darfur led to many economic sanctions on Sudan, and the complete isolation of the regime. It is only in the last two years that change has been taking place.
- He says that the situation in Tigray has escalated a lot faster, but that there is still time to slow down the "carnage". Both the US and the EU, are increasingly signalling their willingness to use harsher measures if necessary. This could hurt Ethiopia a lot, if it does not change course.
- A statement signed by the heads of the IOM, Interaction, the WHO, UNHCR, and other UN, international and non-governmental organisations says that reports of "Indiscriminate and targeted attacks against civilians, including rape and other horrific forms of sexual violence, continue to surface. This must stop."
- They call on all actors to "fulfil their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law;" stop the abuses and respect and protect women and children.
- They say it is essential to have an independent investigation, also specifically one that investigates conflict related sexual violence, involving the UN Human rights body.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 111 - 25 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Minors as soldiers in the War in Tigray (as per 24 March)

- An Eritrean witness states that he saw “many underaged soldiers from Eritrea in Shemelba camp, among the Eritrean troops.” He says: “most of them were from the 33rd Round of Sawa military training camp in Eritrea.”
- The 33rd Round is the latest round of National Service that is indefinite, and which takes the highschool students to military training camps, the main one called Sawa. The source says that the soldiers “were between 16 and 20, most of them filed for the matriculation exam.”
- Last year PM Abiy visited Sawa camp and participated in the graduation parade training rehearsals of the 33rd Round. Round 33 graduated shortly before the beginning of the war and was sent to Tigray.
- Many in the last round are minors and, according to the Eritrean sources, the 33rd Round was sent to Shemelba. The National Service has been qualified as crimes against humanity by the UN Commission of Inquiry on Eritrea and is associated with forced labour and modern slavery.
- The source says that he met one Eritrean minor, who was among the 33rd Round that occupied the Shimelba Refugee camp, where refugees that fled Eritrea were held under international protection.
- The source said: “I met with one of them and his name was Nahom, and he was 16 years old. He was a Tigrinya speaker.”
- The source further says he witnessed the Eritrean youth sent as military being trained while occupying Shimelba: “We saw some of them taking additional training in Shemelba. This was on 15 Dec 2020 and I was arrested on the top of the mountain with others. We were watching them from the mountain.”
- The training of the 33rd round soldiers in Shemelba was a “gunshot training”.
- The training also included some refugees that were brought over from Hitsats camp who were, reportedly, integrated in the Eritrean forces, deployed in Tigray. This was confirmed with refugees providing interviews in Addis Ababa, who were originally from Hitsats.
- Dimtsi Weyane (the TPLF news channel) and TMH reported that an Eritrean soldier aged 16 was captured by the Tigrayan in an ambush involving 17 buses on the way to the front in South-eastern Tigray. The convoy was ambushed by Tigray regional forces.

Reported War Situation in Tigray (as per 24 March)

- More than 20 civilians were dragged out of a public bus and executed by ENDF soldiers near Freweyni town (between Wukro and Adigrat), Eastern Tigray.
- According to MSF, ENDF soldiers carried out extrajudicial killings of at least 4 men in a place between Adigrat and Wukro who were dragged off public buses and executed in the presence of MSF staffs.
- MSF states the staff encountered what appeared to be the aftermath of an ambush of an Ethiopian military convoy, by another armed group, in which soldiers were injured and killed.
- ENDF soldiers at the scene stopped the MSF car and two public minibuses driving behind it. The soldiers forced the passengers to leave the mini buses and men were separated from the women, who were allowed to walk away. Shortly after, the men were shot and the MSF team saw the bodies of those killed on the side of the road.
- Reports of Tigrayan ethnic monks at Waldeba Monastery, Western Tigray were allegedly intimidated, beaten and forced to leave the monastery by their Amhara ethnic counterparts and forces.

- Three opposition parties of Tigray write against the proposal for a joint UN HRC - EHRC investigation of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, stating the EHRC lacks independence.

EHRC report on the Massacre in Axum

- The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has published a report about the Axum, the third report, after Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Amnesty International (AI). It is based on 45 witnesses and obtained video, photographic and audio evidence. They were also able to visit Axum.
- The timeline that they establish is roughly similar to what the other organisations have published. However some of the dates are different. The ECHR says that 6 people were killed by shelling on November 18th. AI & HRW put this event a day later.
- According to ECHR, Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers entered the city a day later, on the 19th of November (AI & HRW set this event on the 20th), and heavy fighting took place, forcing doctors to flee from the hospital. AI & HRW both say that TPLF soldiers left the city before shelling of the city started.
- EHRC says that Axum Referral hospital was looted 4 times by ENDF and Eritrean soldiers in the next days and soldiers "shot a man in bed in the emergency ward."
- Doctors at the hospital say that due to the looting of medical equipment and supplies, 41 people died "for lack of adequate treatment". One pregnant woman, brought in on November 20th died of loss of blood during delivery. Others with shelling wounds died for similar reasons.
- Doctors also say that many others might have died before reaching the hospital. One man was found "with bullet wounds" lying in the sewer.
- Further looting by soldiers took place over the subsequent days. However on the 25th, the ECHR says that ENDF soldiers vacated the city and that the city was reoccupied on the 27th by Eritrean troops.
- On the 28th witnesses say that shooting started all over the city. Witnesses give varying reasons: Some say that armed groups started attacking Eritrean soldiers (the same account as AI & HRW have put forward), others say that Eritrean soldiers "tried to loot Aksum Tsion Church and when residents tried to prevent it, the Eritrean soldiers began shooting at civilians".
- On November 28th Eritrean soldiers started to indiscriminately kill people, carrying out house-to-house searches and executions, rounding up groups of people, killing men in particular.
- The ECHR confirms the report by AI & HRW that Eritreans soldiers stopped people from retrieving the bodies of people killed on November 29th. They shot at those that tried. They only allowed this on November 30th (Both AI & HWR) say that this changed on the evening of the 29th.
- It concludes that "these grave human rights violations may amount to crimes against humanity or war crimes, it underscores the need for a comprehensive investigation into the overall human rights situation in Tigray region."
- The EHRC has also said that since the massacre, security forces have taken lethal action against people on the street after the curfew. Multiple people have been killed. One fled into a church, but was followed and killed by ENDF soldiers. The EHRC is very concerned about these incidents.

Reported international situation (as per 24 March)

- Norway PM, Erna Solberg, raised her concerns about the Tigray conflict in her conversation with Abiy and expressed deep concern about the consequences of the conflict. "
- Finland FM, Haavisto met with Sec. State Blinken at NATO and discussed the crisis in Tigray.
- US Senate Foreign Relations Committee has passed S. Res. 97, a bipartisan resolution on Ethiopia. The resolution calls on the government of Ethiopia, TPLF and other belligerents to cease all hostilities, protect human rights, allow unfettered humanitarian access, and cooperate with independent investigations of credible atrocity allegations pertaining to the conflict in the Tigray.

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<https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/what-we-do/news-stories/news/ethiopia-msf-staff-attacked-after-witnessing-killings-soldiers-tigray?>

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 112 - 26 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

- **Correction:** The number of deaths in Axum estimated by Amnesty International (AI) and Human Rights Watch (HRW) that we reported yesterday is incorrect. Neither organisation has put out a definitive number, but both estimate the number of casualties at 'hundreds', with both organisations estimating a minimum of 200 deaths. The EHRC estimated the number of deaths lower, as "over a hundred".
- Both organisations identify Eritrean troops as the main perpetrators of the extrajudicial killings.
- One witness also told AI that he saw 400 bodies on November 30th alone. However AI also said that many more bodies were found in subsequent days.
- AI found that Eritrean soldiers also rounded up hundreds or thousands of men.
- AP published that a thousand people were estimated to have been killed in Axum based on an interview of a deacon who says that he helped count the bodies.

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 25 March)

- Ethio-360 states that the Ethiopian government is paying a monthly salary to Eritrean soldiers. According to the report, it has credible source and is confident that the monthly salary is being paid as follows: for ordinary soldier - 15,000 Birr (309€), for junior officers - 20, 000 Birr (412€) and for Senior officer - 30,000 Birr (617€) per month is paid.
- These payments are very high compared to the stipend that Eritrean soldiers receive in Eritrea. In the Indefinite national service, Eritrean troops are often left with as little as 3,3 US\$ a month: "In the army military you receive 700 nakfa [USD 47]. But for us, there is no salary. There is 200 nakfa [USD 13] for the family directly from the government in cash, but since 2013, family only gets food (only if you are not in prison then they stop it and when you escape, they stop it). They give us 90 nakfa [USD 6], but they deduct 45 nakfa [USD 3] for camp and food, which leaves 50 nakfa [USD 3.3] as pocket money. (Interview 14, face-to-face, the Netherlands, 26 May 2019)", [stated an interviewee in 2019](#).
- Many IDPs in Tigray have reportedly walked for two weeks, and some have walked as far as 500 km to reach safety. Many young people have been killed and raped. Deliveries have been difficult, often resulting in the loss of the babies. The IDPs are often left with few to no possessions.
- An entire family was allegedly killed by the Ethiopian soldiers in Ziban Sase, a village between Idaga-Hamus and Frewyeni town, eastern Tigray.

Reported Situation on Rape (as per 25 March)

- In a briefing, UN aid coordinator in Ethiopia said that 516 rape cases have been reported to five clinics (Mekelle, Adigrat, Wukro, Shire and Axum) in Tigray region.
- "Women say they have been raped by armed actors, they also told stories of gang-rape, rape in front of family members and men being forced to rape their own family members under the threat of violence," Wafaa Said.
- She projects that the actual number is actually much higher than reported due to a stigma associated with rape and the few functioning healthcare facilities.

Reported Situation in wider Ethiopia (as per 25 March)

- The Ethiopian Somali regional state asks the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) to reverse its decision to call off polling stations. The state explained that it would find it difficult to participate in the upcoming elections if the recent decision by the NEBE to call off the 30 polling stations was upheld.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 25 March)

- Eritrea's Minister of Information, Yemane G. Meskel said Ethiopian PM Abiy arrived on 25/3/21 in Asmara for a two days working visit. His delegation was welcomed by President Isaias Afwerki.
- According to the Sudan Tribune (ST), Sudanese forces clashed with Ethiopian militiamen on Wednesday in the contested border area with Ethiopia.
- The Sudan Tribune says the Sudanese Forces clashed with armed Ethiopian militias backed by the Ethiopian army forces from the Amhara region in the Basinda area. Ethiopian groups penetrated 8 kilometres into the border according to the news organisation. Several people were killed.
- A Sudanese ministerial delegation will head to Abu Dhabi on Friday (26/3/21) in response to the UAE initiative to resolve the border conflict between Sudan and Ethiopia.

Reported international situation (as per 25 March)

- At a joint press conference, the US Secretary of State and the EU High Representative, expressed concern about the conflict in Tigray and said that they had discussed various ways in which ensure a cessation of hostilities, ensure that Eritrean troops leave Tigray, ensure better humanitarian access, and investigate crimes against humanity that have been committed in Tigray.
- The US and EU also urged parties involved in the GERD negotiations to "show flexibility and move promptly to resume productive negotiations in the coming weeks"
- The US calls on the Ethiopian government to uphold fully its commitment to safe and unhindered humanitarian access and underscores the need for forces to end fighting immediately in the region.
- The United Nations and an Ethiopian rights agency have agreed to carry out a joint investigation into abuses in Tigray region. "With multiple actors involved in the conflict and the gravity of the reported violations, an objective, independent investigation is urgently required," the statement said.
- US Amb. Linda Thomas-Greenfield says the protection of civilians and the safe delivery of humanitarian assistance must be ensured after MSF's report of civilian killings and assault of humanitarian workers.
- The Dutch government has said, in an answer to a parliamentary question, that they have called on Eritrea to immediately withdraw troops. It is also in conversation with the EU and EU member states, the US, and UN to improve the situation in Tigray and push for an independent investigation.
- The Dutch government says that there have been some concessions by the Ethiopian government, but these are not enough. These can, however, form the basis for a constructive resolution to the conflict.
- The Global Society of Tigray (GSTS) wrote to the OHCHR in protest against its agreement with Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to jointly investigate human rights violations in Tigray.
- In its substantiation, the GSTS refers to the report by the EHRC on the massacre in Mai Kadra that took place on November 9-10, 2020. The EHRC reported that it found that the perpetrators of the Ma Kadra massacre were the TPLF and that the victims were ethnic Amhara.
- However, the GSTS contests these findings based on its own investigation in the Mai Kadra massacre. It found that the massacre was conducted by Amhara Special Forces, militiamen and an armed youth squad, 'Fano' and found that "90% of the victims were ethnic Tigray".
- The GSTS says that it is, therefore, deeply alarmed by the decision of the OHCHR to conduct a joint investigation with Ethiopian Human Rights Commission into the grave crimes in Tigray, that it is not impartial and asks for the decision to be retracted on the ground that an independent international investigation is necessary.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 114 - 29 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Eritrean withdrawal agreement(as per 29 March)

- A source has provided potential new information regarding the withdrawal of Eritrean troops that has been agreed. However, this information has not been confirmed. It is printed here because of its reliable source and, if it were to be true, this is significant information.
- According to this unconfirmed information, PM Abiy and President Esayas have made a deal which is referred to as an “Army Withdrawal from Tigray Agreement.”
- The agreement calls for at least a partial integration of Eritrean forces into the ENDF. This would help fill a capacity left by the war in Tigray. The integration of these forces would be financed by Ethiopia and would also involve a change of Eritrean troops into Ethiopian uniform.
- The numbers mentioned are so significant that this requires further corroboration.
- If these elements of the deal would be true, then technically there is no exit but a significant redeployment, change of uniform and budgeting for the inclusion of the Eritrean troops into the ENDF.
- The unconfirmed information states that the troops would be trained under the authority of Eritrean General Filippos.
- Within this agreement, Ethiopia would also finance the training of new Eritrean soldiers.
 - In addition to the above, there have been several reports that Eritrea is rounding up young boys aged 16 or older, and sending them to training camps.
 - And a separate message which was obtained from Asmara reads: *“All families have been asked to hand in their children from 16 onwards. ALL CHILDREN TRAINED OR UNTRAINED. IT DOESN’T MATTER. People are rattled and very fearful.”*
- The ‘Army withdrawal from Tigray Agreement’ allegedly also calls for Amhara militias to be integrated into the ENDF.
- The agreement would also call for the reintegration of officers of Tigrayan origin, after they have been through a political education programme.
- If these details regarding the agreements are true, it would be a drastic set of measures. The numbers mentioned in the information are significant. There have been indications that the ENDF has been having difficulties fighting the conflict in Tigray, and that the withdrawal of Eritrean forces could endanger Ethiopian government control over the region.
- Simultaneously, Ethiopia has found itself under significant pressure from the United States, the EU and the UN to stop the intervention by foreign actors in the conflict. The Ethiopian government might be trying to reduce the pressure.
- A witness testimony has related the situation of a 16-year old highschool student from Asmara, Eritrea, who was rounded up in a razzia in January 2021. He was taken to Barentu where he was given two months of training with other conscripts.

- The family of the 16-year old Eritrean boy lost contact with him once his training was finished and they were unsure of his location. They realised that he had been sent to fight in Tigray when he was named with his full name on Tigray television after he had been captured by Tigray regional forces. This further confirms that Eritrea is deploying underaged minors in Tigray.

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 28 March)

- Axum University four professors, Alemshet Gebrehiwot, Berihu Gebremariam, Hadgu Ataklti and Berihu Hailu, were identified among those killed by Eritrean soldiers during the Axum massacre.
- Reports from inside Tigrays indicate fresh deployment of Eritrean soldiers. A total of 37 trucks of Eritrean troops entered Tigray on 27 March 2021 through Adigrat. 25 trucks out of the 37 are stationed in Edaga Hamus, near Adigrat and they are now gathering there from surrounding areas.
- The remaining 12 trucks with freshly deployed Eritrean troops went to Mugulat (on the way from Adigrat to Enticho) and are stationed there. New troops from West Tigray are stationed in Selekkele, near Shire.
- Reports of 13 civilians, including a mother with 2 kids (aged 5 and 7 years) and an entire family of 5 were executed on 24 March 2021 by Eritrean soldiers in Finarwa, near Samre, South-eastern Tigray.
- Eritrean soldiers killed everyone in the neighborhood after identifying militiamen's wife among them.
- Ethiopian soldiers searched a safe house for survivors of gender based violence on 24 March 2021 in Mekelle, Tigray. Soldiers, many in number, entered the premises claiming donations to the institutions were being smuggled to the 'junta'.
- The soldiers showed no care for the property or regulations of the facility that prohibits the presence of males over the age of 3 years to provide a safe space for women who have suffered trauma. The soldiers abused employees of the facility and illegally detained one of them for hours.
- Telecom service was shut down today from 8pm till 12pm in the Tigray region. But restored at 12pm.
- Tigray Media House (TMH) confirmed that its satellite TV transmission has been blocked due to the pressure of the Ethiopian government and the CEO promised the service will be restored soon.
- During his acceptance speech at GUMMA AWARDS, a Tigrayan Artist, Esayas Tadesse, said: "I won't celebrate when my mother is shedding tears of blood; my brother brutally slaughtered and his body thrown off a cliff; and my genteel sister raped by hooligans. I shall celebrate when my mothers' tears are wiped and the dignity of my homeland is restored."
- A video was obtained of an interview with a mother who escaped from May Kadra to Mekelle. She escaped with her 20 years old pregnant daughter. When the war erupted and the Eritrean soldiers joined the war, the mother went to the bush with her daughter.
- When the pregnant daughter started labor there was no one to assist. The fetus died and the mother expelled the dead fetus on her own as there was no anyone to help. The daughter developed fistula because of the long labor. The mother and daughter traveled all the way to Mekelle for medical treatment (fistula treatment) and safety.
- When the mother was asked about the May Kadra massacre, she stated that the Fano Youth Militia committed the killings. She said many of her neighbors were killed with machetes and stones. Their dead bodies were eaten by dogs. The victims did not get a chance for burial.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 115 - 30 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 29 March)

- Reuters has published stories of Tigrayans from Western Tigray. Tens of thousands have been forced out of their homes and sent to central Tigray, where a lot of fighting is still taking place.
- Reuters interviewed the IDPs, chased away from Western Tigray. The IDPs say that Amhara officials summoned entire villages in February and said that Tigrayans needed to leave, otherwise they would be killed.
- Mulu Nega, the federally appointed head of the Tigray interim administration, has said that “western Tigray zone is occupied by the Amhara militias and special forces, and they are forcing the people to leave their homes.” However, Amhara officials deny these claims.
- Amhara claims that the territories they are seizing have been historically theirs. Tigrayans refute these claims by saying that the region has been inhabited by both ethnicities and that the Ethiopian constitution demarks them as being Tigrayan.
- Other reports also indicate that Amhara militias have been systematically removing Tigrayans, not Amhara people. They are also urging Amharic people to move into the region and to take over the abandoned houses.
- OCHA has indicated that a 1000 people are arriving from Western Tigray in Shire everyday, with 45 thousand having fled since february. The NRC said last week that between 140,000-185,000 arrived over a two week period since March.
- Reuters interviewed 42 Western Tigrayan who say that they have been evicted in mass. One witness said that “If you don't leave the area within two days, you will lose your lives”. Others said that Amhara gunmen were rounding Tigrayans up.
- These witnesses also said Amhara militias have systematically looted the entire countryside.
- Before the conflict started there were more than 180 thousand people with noncommunicable diseases in Tigray. Those diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, or pulmonary disease. A severe shortage of medicine has made it difficult to provide sufficient basic medicines such as insulin and anti hypertensive drugs.
- The bad state of hospitals and medical facilities in Tigray after four months of fighting has made it even more difficult to provide for those people who need it.
- Six people reportedly died due to lack of insulin. The number could be higher.
- The Eritrean exiled journalist, Abraham T Zere, wrote an opinion piece in Al Jazeera questioning how long President Isayas Afwerki would be able to hold on to power.
- He argues that the Withdrawal agreement, which Eritrea has yet to confirm, puts a lot of pressure on President Isayas. If he stays, he has an international problem. However, retreating could also create new problems, as Tigrayan fighters will be able to reassert control over large parts of the Tigrayan land. This could lead to a protracted fight on the border between the TPLF and the Eritrean army.

- Moreover, there have been signs of unhappiness in Eritrean forces. They are afraid that they will end up being stuck in the mountainous Tigrayan landscape, unable to retreat back into Eritrea, while taking heavy casualties due to heavy fighting.
- Abraham T Zere also argues that Prime Minister Abiy is looking for a scapegoat, and is thinking about “throwing Isayas under the bus”. The PM recently admitted that Eritrean forces had committed atrocities in Tigray.
- Reports of an unknown number of Oromo ethnic members of the ENDF who were stationed near Humera, western Tigray have fled to Sudan.
- In an interview with TMH, TPLF’s Executive Member, Getachaw Reda, has confirmed the fresh deployment of Eritrean soldiers to Tigray in the last three days.
- Tigrayan students refused to stand for the Ethiopia National Anthem during Addis Ababa Science and Technology University graduation ceremony in protest of the atrocities in Tigray.

Eritrean withdrawal agreement(as per 29 March)

- EEPA has received testimonies of people in Tigray.
- The first video is that of a mother who survived the Mai Kadra massacre with her pregnant daughter. According to the refugee, the massacre was carried out by Fano Militia. She says that they had to hide in the bush for a month, during which the daughter miscarried. They had to travel to Mekelle to receive medical treatment.
- Another is the testimony of a young man from Axum who was shot three times by Ethiopian troops in early February. He had fled to Mekelle at the beginning of the conflict, but was returning to Axum.
- A woman tells the story of how Eritrean soldiers entered her village Adichilla in Smret district and shot her entire family. Her mother, brother, nephew and uncle were all killed.
- An Adigrat University student from Tanqua Abergele in Tembien, says that Eritreans shot him multiple times while he and his family were asleep.
- A woman was raped by a group of five Eritrean soldiers. She was kidnapped and brought out of Adigrat. She was held together with other women, enough to fill a “minibus”. The woman was raped multiple times over the course of the following days. She says that one of the women that was captured with her was pregnant and gave birth. The Eritrean soldiers killed the newborn son in front of her. They also killed her other son.
- When the soldiers released her, she was injected with something to make her fall unconscious. They then instructed her to say that Ethiopian troops had committed the rapes or else she would be killed.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 116 - 31 March 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia (as per 30 March)

- Assena TV reports that a delegation led by General Filipos Woldeyohannes, chief of Staff of the Eritrean military, is set to discuss issues including the opening of Assab port to Ethiopia.
- In March 2019, France signed an agreement to re-build the Ethiopian navy.
- The mission would echo unconfirmed reports that talks would begin on a federation between Eritrea and Ethiopia, as reported by the HornDaily news site.
- According to the HornDaily: "Just prior to the conflict erupting in Tigray, President Isaias brought his closest political and military advisers together for an intense discussion on how to proceed."
- It says President Isayas told the advisers "that the country had to accept that it has a small and not very viable economy and a lengthy Red Sea coast, which Eritrean cannot patrol on its own."
- President Isayas offered the idea that "some sort of 'union' with Ethiopia might be possible, at least in terms of economic co-operation and maritime security."
- According to the HornDaily this idea "echoed Prime Minister Abiy's dream of re-establishing the unity of Eritrea and Ethiopia. Part of this vision involved a potential Ethiopian Navy."
- Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson Dina Mufti alludes to the possibility of a Eritrean-Ethiopian federation.
- Answering questions in a press conference he stated: "By the way if Eritreans were asked, they do not celebrate the day they left Ethiopia and those abroad say this. There is also the same feeling from the Ethiopian side."
- Dina Mufti continued: "It would be good if we could be one nation with our neighbouring countries. The relationship we had with Eritrea, we are one people and one country. This is the result of Cold War politics."
- He also suggests a federation "is a good wish or vision. Unity increases influence, market etc. We have to think this also about Kenya and other neighbours. IGAD was established with this purpose: first economic integration and then moving into unity."
- Multiple reports received from Eritrea, that, as youth were allowed to return to school after a COVID-19 lockdown, they are now rounded up for national service, presumably to be sent to Tigray.
- The messages come in parallel to a figure released by a source close to the Ethiopian Ministry of Defence that 100.000 to 150.000 Eritrean forces (mainly the senior & middle commanders, trainers & mechanized & some infantry personnel) will be integrated into ENDF.
- The agreement would include that Eritrean soldiers will be paid by Ethiopia. The Eritreans are paid 15.000 birr a month, which is 372 USD. In Eritrea soldiers receive in their pocket a very small stipend, which can be as low as 3 USD a month.
- Ethiopian soldiers receive 7.500 birr a month, which is half of the amount reportedly offered to the Eritrean soldiers to be integrated in the Ethiopian army.
- The new army in which Eritrean troops are integrated will be led by Eritrean army General Filipos Woldeyohannes, Chief of Staff.

- According to the report, the details of the integration of the Eritrean forces are worked out by Ethiopian Ministry of Defense, Dr. Kenea Yaddeta and Eritrean Security chief, Abraha Kassa.
- In the Ethiopian election campaign, the Amhara Prosperity Party has been showing maps of Ethiopia which included Eritrea. They claim that they are going to bring it back into a Federation. The text on the map reads “being PP means sustaining Ethiopia in the face of external and internal enemies.”
- In an opinion piece in al Jazeera, Awol K Allo, a lecturer in Law at Keele University, has argued that Ethiopia urgently needs a national dialogue. The current conflict in Tigray is a result of different views of how the Ethiopian constitution should be organised.
- When the TPLF came to power in 1991, they imposed an ethnic federalist perspective on Ethiopia. PM Abiy, who came to power on the promise of reform and a stronger voice for the Oromo community, has instead started the process moving Ethiopia towards a Unitary state, argues Awol.
- He argues that the current Ethiopian federation is largely built on top of the foundations of the Ethiopian Empire, which was dominated by the Amhara ethnic group.

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 30 March)

- Mekelle city interim administration Mayor, Ataklti Haileselassie was fired from his post. He said once in public that Eritrean forces are in Tigray.
- Internal sources in Tigray indicate fighting is ongoing between Eritrean troops and Tigray regional forces near Selekleka, a strategic town in the northwestern zone of Tigray (between Aksum and Shire).
- Eritrean forces are moving 30 trucks of troops to help their force in Selekleka. They are also moving troops from Adwa towards Selekleka.
- After almost three months, this is the first time fighting is taking place in the northwestern zone of Tigray, indicating that the Tigray regional forces may be increasing their coverage of battle beyond the southern and central zones of the region.
- Recently deposed deputy bureau head in the Tigray interim administration, Amdom GebreSelassie says they did not expect the war to be aimed at the general public.
- “We thought that a law enforcement campaign would only focus on its leaders. Property has been looted from homes in both rural and urban areas and the murder is horrific,” added Amdom.
- Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) reports on the harsh conditions for displaced populations in Adwa, Aksum and Shire. Most settle in informal settlements, lacking food, water and sanitation aid. Particularly, Shire is overcrowded, as it is often the first town entered by people fleeing western Tigray.
- Some IDPs MSF spoke to have fled from one city to another. “In the early days of the crisis, they saw their hometown filling up with people fleeing violence elsewhere and later witnessed it being attacked by Eritrean soldiers.”

Reported International situation (as per 30 March)

- US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has spoken to UN Sec. Gen. Guterres. Among other things they spoke about Tigray, the need for an independent investigation and the withdrawal of Eritrean troops.
- In the parliament of the United Kingdom, the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Eritrea was re-established. An early priority of the group is to assess Eritrea’s role in Tigray.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 117 - 01 April 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia (as per 31 March)

- Martin Plaut, a journalist specialised on the Horn of Africa has published following report, received from inside Eritrea. It is reproduced verbatim.
 - “1. No plans to pull Eritrean troops from Ethiopia – the press release by the Ethiopian government is propaganda and far from the truth. Eritrean forces will not leave Tigray.
 - 2. What has been agreed is for 12 Division currently in Tigray to be assimilated with Ethiopian Defence Force immediately. This will be followed by the rest of Eritrean forces coming under Ethiopian command.
 - 3. All Eritrean army uniforms in Tigray will change to Ethiopian Defence Force immediately.
 - 4. One of Abiy’s delegates was Dr Abraham, security and spy expert, who will be responsible for the operations of both countries. He will align the necessary technological and satellite infrastructure of both countries.
 - 5. On the Eritrean side, Brigadier General Simon Gebredingel has been assigned to work with Dr Abraham.
 - 6. Current Eritrean Army Generals will be forced into retirement and replaced by Ethiopians.
 - 7. Federation talks are said to start soon.”
- Much of this information supplements similar information that has come from Ethiopian sources. However none of it has been confirmed.
- Dina Mufta, the spokesperson of the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, retracted his statements of yesterday, that Eritreans and Ethiopians would be happy to come together in a federation.
- Today, Dina Mufti came on the Ethiopian TV and side stepped the Independence Day remarks confidently and blamed others for twisting his speech. He said Ethiopia recognizes the Independence and Sovereignty of Eritrean.
- Eritrea has announced that it will be expanding its road network in the Gash-Barka region. The region links Eritrea to Sudan and Ethiopian Western Tigray (through Humera). A picture was posted with a military national service person in uniform, working on the roads.

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 31 March)

- Oromia Regional State Communication bureau said unknown numbers of civilians were killed in the West Wollega Zone of the region in Babo Genbel Woreda, Bone Kebelle.
- The state bureau has blamed the OLF/Shene group acting on the orders of the TPLF for the attacks, which it described as gruesome and horrific.
- Sudan Tribune (ST) said Eritrean forces killed two refugees on the Sudanese-Ethiopian border as they were returning to their areas in Tigray from the Hamdayet reception centre in Sudan.
- They were leaving due to the lack of services in the crowded reception centers. Both camps are full.
- The witnesses said that the people killed were shot directly in the head. Some Oromo refugees were among those trying to flee. Some of those that survived were transported back to Hamdayet.

- The ST report also said the Gadaref State proposed a location for the third camp but no decision has been made as it should be first visited by the UNHCR and the Commission for Refugees before making a final decision.

Reported International situation (as per 31 March)

- The US Congressional committee on Foreign Affairs is increasing pressure on the Biden administration to take more forceful action over the pressing humanitarian situation in the Tigray region. It is urging the administration to use targeted sanctions immediately on all involved parties, including Ethiopia.
- The move came through a bipartisan letter from Gregory Meeks, Democratic chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and ranking Republican Michael McCaul was sent to US Secretary of State A. Blinken and Sec. of Treasury Janet Yellen.
- The letter says: "We urge the [Biden] administration to utilise all available tools, including Global Magnitsky authorities and other targeted sanctions, to hold parties accountable for their actions and bring an end to this crisis."
- The letter implicates all sides in such abuses and stresses that additional targeted accountability measures cannot wait. It also says that the conflict threatens problems for the future of US-Ethiopia bilateral relation if the situation does not improve. "While we remain committed to the important bilateral relationship between the US and Ethiopia, this conflict jeopardises shared political, economic and security priorities," Mr Meeks & Mr McCaul wrote.
- The US state department has released its annual reports on human rights around the world. It indicated that there has been a dramatic increase in ethnic tensions and resulting violence.
- It finds that millions of Ethiopians have been displaced in recent years, most of them due to violence.
- It also concludes that the Ethiopian government, Eritrea, TPLF, regional militias, and other armed forces have committed human rights abuses, extrajudicial killings, sexual assaults, and others.
- Cameron Hudson, a senior fellow with the Atlantic Council's Africa Centre, argued that Washington is following a gradual approach in ratcheting up the pressure on Ethiopia.
- "We [the US] have already suspended our development assistance and our security assistance. Those moves seem to have very little impact in changing [Addis Ababa's] approach to the conflict in Tigray. The next level of pressure is clearly going to be direct punitive measures," added Mr Hudson.
- Mr Hudson states the letter addressed to Mr Blinken and copied to Ms Yellen, is an indication of potential sanctions by the departments of State and Treasury. "This likely will translate into sanctions unless Washington starts to see greater movement on the key issues it is asking for changes on, namely the withdrawal of Eritrean and Amhara forces, the launch of the international human rights investigation, unhindered humanitarian access and some sort of domestic political dialogue," Mr Hudson said.
- On the role of Treasury specifically, Mr Hudson said: "The Treasury does two big things that affect US policy on Ethiopia: It administers US sanctions and it controls the US vote at the World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) ... The US has leverage in denying or delaying Ethiopia multilateral financing and assistance and not just bilateral assistance."
- The UAE has invited the foreign ministers of Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia to Abu Dhabi to resume diplomatic dialogue and end disagreement over the GERD.
- Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Oman announced their support to Egypt and Sudan's efforts to protect their shares in the Nile River's water, stressing their water security is an integral part of the Arab region's security.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 118 - 02 April 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Sexual and human rights violation in Tigray (as per 01 April)

- New York Times (NYT) report says rape is being used as a weapon as fighting rages in remote parts of the Tigray region. It is one of the many accounts that they have heard.
- NYT report said that they spoke to Mona Lisa, an 18-year-old high school graduate who survived an attempted rape that left her with seven gunshot wounds and an amputated arm.
- An Ethiopian soldier burst into her house in Abiy Addi, Central Tigray. They then ordered her and her Grandfather to have sex. The grandfather refused and was shot in the leg. The soldier then tried to rape her. She however resisted and was shot multiple times.
- She wanted it to be known that she had resisted. "This is ethnic cleansing," she said. "Soldiers are targeting Tigrayan women to stop them giving birth to more Tigrayans."
- Letay Tesfay of the Tigray Women's Association, which runs a safe house for women in Mekelle said to the NYT that rape is being used as a weapon of war. "What's happening is unimaginable," she added.
- "The epidemic of sexual assault is exacerbated by a collapsing health system. Many victims have contracted sexually transmitted diseases, including H.I.V.," doctors told the NYT.
- The doctors said the demand for abortions and emergency contraceptives has risen. One doctor has said that he has received an average of three patients a day since the ENDF occupied Mekelle. Some were raped in IDP camps, others were abducted from the countryside. The youngest he encountered was 14.
- Another 29 year old woman was tied to a tree for 10 days and raped repeatedly. Some soldiers also shot and killed her 12 year old son.
- A waitress in Mekelle says that she and two other women were raped at her place of work. Her body was still covered in bruises.

Reported Situation in Eritrea (as per 01 April)

- More reports of razzias or round ups in Eritrea. Schools have opened and students of the tenth grade are forced to move to Sawa for military training. These include minors of 16th years of age.
- People are trying to run and hide from the round ups.
- Military are searching from house to house to find recruits. They are checking lists of family members to search them or punish relatives if they can not find the youths on the list.
- There are rumours reported amongst Eritrean people that it is merging with Ethiopia and that the Ethiopian navy will take over Eritrean ports. Such rumours can be initiated by "03" responsible for propaganda. At this moment it is not clear what navy capacity Ethiopia has, although it had discussed this ambition of reestablishing a navy and signed an agreement with France in 2018.
- According to the Embassy of Eritrea, Deputy Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonen, has formally apologized to the people and government of Eritrea for what he called "misguided and unacceptable" remarks made in the previous days by the spokesperson Dina Mufti.
- Dina Mufti speculated on the interest of Eritrean and Ethiopian people to give up their sovereignty and move Eritrea into an integrated Ethiopia.

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 01 April)

- Fierce fighting between the ENDF allied forces and Tigray forces, including airstrikes in Southern and Eastern zones of Tigray.
- Reported that Ethiopian, Eritrean and Amhara forces have engaged in new intensive attack in Eastern and Southern Tigray that include aerial bombardment and artillery shelling.
- Reports of power blackout in all parts of Tigray region.
- Raya University of Tigray is serving as a military camp for both Ethiopian and Eritrean troops as well as a military training compound.
- Ethiopian and Eritrean troops dressed in Tigray forces uniforms have blocked humanitarian aid trucks in Southern Tigray. They were video recording at the scene to accuse Tigrayan forces.
- Tigray interim Administration appointees, Mr. Meles Solomon (Chief Administrator of South-Eastern Zone), Mr. Mulubrhan Haile (Deputy Administrator of North Western zone), Mr. Gidena G/medhin (Deputy head of Water Resources Bureau) and Lilay Hailemariam (Head of Security and Administration Bureau) have been fired from their posts.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (as per 01 April)

- In a new report, OCHA estimates there are 9.6 million displaced people and 4.7 million refugees in the Horn of Africa region.
- They also estimate that 33.8 million people are facing severe food shortages, of these 12.8 million are children.
- Ethiopia's Ministry of Innovation and Technology has consulted and signed an agreement with a Czech company named LIAZ on adaptation and utilization of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV).
- Ethiopia's Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region (SNNPR) Bureau of Finance said the government has not been able to pay salaries due to budget and cash constraints. Excessive payments for operating expenses are said to be the reason for the lack of cash.

Reported International situation (as per 01 April)

- The United Nations Security Council has said that Somalia needs to find a solution regarding its election impasse at the "earliest opportunity".
- Sudan has asked the United States to add pressure on Ethiopia not to go through with its planned second filling this summer, Sudan also requests the US to join and help move the negotiations forward.
- The Sudan Tribune reported that a Sudanese Major General told them that "There is an option to negotiate and reach an agreement, and there is the option of military action against the dam."
- He said this in the context of Egypt and Sudan holding joint aircraft combat drills.
- The Sudanese Foreign Minister also accused Ethiopia of stalling negotiations in order to be able to go forwards with the second filling.
- An Egyptian water expert has said that there would be large side effects of a second filling of the GERD dam. It could stop the drinking water stations in Eastern Sudan, stop the electricity production at Rosires and Sennar dams due to lack of water and both countries could face billions of cubic meters in water shortages.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 119 - 05 April 2021

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Sexual and human rights violation in Tigray (as per 04 April)

- Financial Times (FT) spoke to a 19-year-old student who was raped by four Eritrean soldiers and says she remembered running to a forest to escape fighting in her home town in the Tigray region.
- FT report states when she regained consciousness, she was in the forest and her blood was pouring out of her nose and genitals.
- The survivor says that she does not feel Ethiopian anymore, as the federal government would not let Tigrayans be raped by soldiers if they were citizens. She is not the only one to voice such sentiments.
- FT report said anger is evident in the streets of Mekelle. "We all want an independent Tigray now more than ever. We don't want to be occupied either by Ethiopia nor Eritrea," said Meseret Yitbarek.
- Medical Director of Ayder Referral Hospital, Kibrom G/selassie told FT that the situation in Tigray is highly polarised, which is a catalyst for violence. He described rape of Tigrayans as a weapon of war.

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 04 April)

- Both the BBC and CNN have analysed videos that appeared on social media of soldiers rounding up and discussing the execution of young men near what they believe is Mahibere Degro, Central Tigray.
- In the video, soldiers wearing Ethiopian uniforms shot the men in the head and subsequently pushed them over a cliff.
- The soldiers are heard discussing the execution and the need to save up bullets. They also say that they have to make sure that they are all dead.
- CNN has also spoken to a man that says he was present and managed to escape. According to the person interviewed, his 23 year old brother was among the men in the group.
- Researchers have compiled a list of people that have been killed in the conflict in Tigray. The list includes 1.900 names, including that of infants and people aged over 90.
- Ethiopian and Eritrean forces have indiscriminately shelled the town of Hawzen, Eastern Tigray.
- Reports of 20 trucks of fresh Eritrean soldiers have entered the region of Tigray through Zalambessa.
- Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers have allegedly killed an unknown number of civilians in the town of Selekleka, near Shire.
- Reports of almost the entire region of Tigray is hit by power blackout for a fourth day in a row.
- The spokesperson for the TPLF has told Bloomberg in an interview that Eritrean troops have no intention of leaving Tigray. He told them instead that more troops are being sent to the region.
- Prime Minister Abiy said Ethiopia's military is fighting "on eight fronts" in hotspots including the northern Tigray region, where adversaries have adopted "guerrilla" tactics.
- "The junta [TPLF] which we had eliminated within three weeks has now turned itself into a guerrilla force, mingled with farmers and started moving from place to place," said Abiy. "Now, we are not able to eliminate it within three months," he added.
- Abiy also said that eliminating an enemy which is visible and eliminating an enemy which is in hiding and operates by assimilating itself with others is not one and the same. It is very difficult and tiresome.
- "Currently, the national defense forces and the federal forces are in a major fight on eight fronts in the north and the west against enemies which are anti-farmers, anti-civilians and causing strife among Ethiopians," said Abiy.
- He told lawmakers last month that pro-TPLF fighters were "like flour dispersed by the wind."

- Ethiopian authorities said that Eritrean troops have started withdrawing from Tigray, where they have been fighting on the side of Ethiopian forces in a war against the region's fugitive leaders.
- "The Eritreans have now started to evacuate Tigray and Ethiopian forces have taken over guarding the national border, said Ethiopia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- However, it is not clear how many Eritrean troops have left, and some in Tigray assert that the Eritrean troops aren't leaving at all.
- Tigrayan leaders have claimed that some Eritrean troops are dressed in Ethiopian military uniforms.
- The interim Mayor of Tigray, who either resigned or was fired, said in an interview that there are three reasons why he resigned from his post.
- Firstly he says that the interim administration is solely focused on restoring Mekelle, and is doing little for the rest of the region. This has created tensions regarding the hundreds of thousands of IDPs. Regional administrators to other areas had been assigned, but they have mostly remained in Mekelle.
- Secondly an ENDF general "gave land to an investor out of his will" even though he did not have authority. A conflict arose between the mayor and the general and the latter threatened to force the interim government to intervene.
- Thirdly, a man connected to Mulu Nega, the interim President of the region, was taking bribes to accept the transport of looted machinery out of the region. The man was arrested, but said that he was working for Nega.

Reported Situation in the Horn region(as per 04 April)

- Sudan Tribune says Sudan has closed Gallabat border crossing with neighbouring Ethiopia after an attack by Ethiopian militiamen.
- The closure was decided after an attack by the militiamen against the Sudanese customs officers in presence of the Ethiopian forces.
- The strategic Gallabat-Metema crossing is used by traders and workers between the two countries and serves as a transition point for Ethiopia's imported or exported goods.

Reported International situation (as per 04 April)

- The G7 have released a statement on Tigray. They condemn the killings and other abuses that have taken place, and urge all parties to respect human rights and international law. They also call on all parties to start negotiations and an inclusive political dialogue that leads to a credible reconciliation.
- They also said that an independent investigation into the atrocities was required. They also offered to support humanitarian assistance if necessary.
- US senator and Biden envoy to Ethiopia, Chris Coons, has said that the footage emerging from Tigray of extrajudicial killings, murders, sexual violence, and other crimes is "deeply disturbing".
- The Tigray Center for Information and Communication (T.C.I.C) calls on President Biden to hold Ethiopia and Prime Minister Abiy accountable for crimes committed in Tigray.
- Josep Borrell expressed fears that violence in Tigray could spill over into neighbouring countries. "This conflict threatens also to destabilize the whole Horn of Africa," Borrell added.
- EU envoy Pekka Haavisto travelled to Saudi Arabia, UAE en route on his second trip to Ethiopia to discuss the crisis in Tigray.
- Labour MP and shadow minister Helen Hayes and House of Lords member David Alton, have urged the British government to invoke article 41 of the UNSC after video evidence of a massacre perpetrated by the Ethiopian army has emerged. Specifically the UK should ask the UN to set up a tribunal, such as was the case in Bosnia and Rwanda, to examine these atrocities.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 120 - 06 April 2021

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Ethiopian Briefing (as per 05 April)

- An Ethiopian briefing on its approach regarding public relations management has been leaked. It discusses various priorities that Ethiopia needs to pursue in order to lessen international pressure.
- In the US they should avoid a new house resolution regarding Tigray “at all costs”, and “it is crucial” to water down the first resolution as much as possible. The need to stop any future US resolution is mentioned multiple times throughout the document.
- The briefing also urges Ethiopian diplomats to more actively engage with their EU and US counterparts to avoid potential future sanctions under the Magnitsky act (both in the EU and US).
- The proposed actions include a more active role for Ethiopian embassies to respond to concern in the US and EU and to mobilizing the diaspora networks to engage with parliamentarians. The networks should push a common goal and be guided by Ethiopian diplomatic missions.
- The briefing also puts forward several talking points; those include the increased humanitarian access, the fact that the UN and other international organisations have confirmed this, and the “notification process” that allows easier access for humanitarian personnel.
- It is important to note that while the UN and other international organisations have said that the situation has improved, it is only marginal and much remains to be done. They have also said that humanitarian access to large parts of Tigray remains often difficult, and sometimes impossible.

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 05 April)

- TMH broadcasted an interview conducted with a 16-year-old captive Eritrean soldier, Rhodamine Yemane. “I was forcibly taken in December 2020 to a military camp and trained for three months. I entered Tigray with the 22nd division of the Eritrean forces on 16 March 2021,” Rhodamine said.
- “They (Eritrean commanders) told us not to be afraid of Tigrayans saying we will finish the Tigray forces,” said Rhodamine. According to Rhodamine, Eritrean officers have told soldiers being sent that Tigrayan soldiers are ill equipped. They also told them that Tigrayan forces had been defeated, and now it was only a matter of capturing Debretsion Gebremichael.
- Rhodamine says the logistics of the Eritrean forces such as biscuits, packed meat and green beans mainly comes from the Ethiopian National Defense forces (ENDF) and only bread comes from Eritrea.
- “The Eritrean officers told us that Tigrayans have only built apartments and houses, but we have built minds. Now you see the houses and apartments have been easily destroyed,” said Rhodamine.
- According to Rhodamine, the 53rd division of the Eritrean forces was mainly engaged in looting and destruction in Tigray.
- “For me it was only three days since I came to Tigray and I was not paid my salary. I saw other Eritrean soldiers having Ethiopian Birr in their pockets, but I do not know who gave them,” said Rhodamine.
- Rhodamine also said he wants to be reunited with his family. “I miss my mom, my father is in Mekelle with my sister,” added Rhodamine.
- The official Ethiopian foreign ministry twitter account thanked Eritrea for helping to fight against the TPLF. This comes after months of both governments denying that Eritrean troops were in Tigray. The tweets did not mention anything about Eritrean withdrawal.

- Multiple videos have emerged of Amhara militias beating up Oromo people. In one video, 6 people were killed as a result of the scene.
- There is an increasing belief in Tigray that the region should be independent. With a lot of violence being perpetrated against the local population, there is increasing support for independence as admitted by the interim government officials, due to crimes and violence committed against Tigrayans.
- People interviewed by the Financial Times have said that being Ethiopian meant nothing any more, and instead aspire for an independent Tigray. These sentiments will complicate future peace negotiations.
- Reports of two pregnant women have died in delivery in Samre due to lack of health facilities in Tigray.
- The UNHCR has released new data regarding the refugees arriving from Tigray in Sudan. They say 61 thousand have arrived since the start of the conflict. However 45 thousand of those arrived in November and only 1.500 arrived in February.
- According to many refugees the border between both countries has been effectively locked, with people trying to cross, in either direction, being shot at.
- The Oromo Liberation Front issued a statement that they have concrete evidence of Eritrean troops fighting in the Oromia Regional State.
- At least 30 people were killed and more than 50 others were injured in an attack in Haruka area of the Afar regional state.
- African Arguments report says any probe into war crimes committed in the Tigray region that involves the AU or the government's own Human Rights Commission stands little chance of being effective.
- Tigrayan political parties and the ousted President, Debretsion Gebremichael, wouldn't consider a probe into the war led by the AU or Ethiopian Human Rights Commission as legitimate: "They expect that any such effort would be unduly influenced by the Ethiopian government and serve as a way for the state to cover up, rather than expose, war crimes," added the report
- "The Somali Regional State Special Forces carried out the attack in Haruka kebele and more than 30 civilians were shot dead," said Ahmed Hamed, Deputy Police commissioner of the Afar Regional state.
- According to the Afar Regional State Police Commission, two members of the Somali Region State Special Forces have also killed two government employees in Gewane town of Afar.

Reported Situation in the Horn region(as per 05 April)

- Eritrea has announced that it was resuming commercial flights. Only two routes will be served for the time being, one between Asmara and Addis Ababa, another between Asmara and Dubai.
- According to Release International, 35 christians were arrested in Asmara and Asab in March. They were arrested while praying.

Reported International situation (as per 05 April)

- U.S. State Department spokesperson Ned Price said the United States was gravely concerned about the violence in Ethiopia's Tigray region and was looking into the reports of massacres there.
- Price welcomed statements that Eritrean troops would withdraw from Tigray and said withdrawal would be an important step forward in de-escalation in the region.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 121 - 07 April 2021

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Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 06 April)

- Reports of heavy military reinforcement by ENDF around Shire town, North western Tigray.
- Dimtsi Woyane (DW) International reported that 125 civilians, including three brothers, were allegedly killed by the Ethiopian and Eritrean forces in Maykinetal district, Central Zone of Tigray.
- Video footage showing bodies of those civilians executed in the village of Teka Tesfay, near Wukro town which was witnessed by the MSF staff, circulates in social media.
- Reports of power blackout almost in all parts of Tigray region for six days in a row. The road from Mekelle to Alamata is also closed due to ongoing fighting.
- Athletes representing Tigray at the Ethiopian Athletics Anniversary wore all black, kept their heads down and walked as if their hands were chained in protest of the ongoing atrocities and destruction in the Tigray region.
- USAID released a report on sexual violence in Tigray, based on an analysis of 36 events and a 106 women and girls. Four women were killed after being raped.
- USAID also says that there were at least 144 perpetrators. 44% of those are Ethiopian soldiers, 33% Eritrean, and 6% both. The remaining perpetrators are unknown or Amhara militia. In 76% of the cases were perpetrated by multiple men.
- 39% were raped inside their homes, 21 were kidnapped and raped in military camps, and 18% alongside the road. A further 11% were also raped while in a hospital.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (as per 06 April)

- Reports of fighting between Afar regional state and Somali regional state forces of Ethiopia.
- The border clash between Afar and Somali regions have killed at least 100 people.
- Ahmed Humed, deputy police commissioner for the Afar region said clashes broke out on Friday and continued through Tuesday. He blamed the violence on the attack by Somali regional forces.
- "The Somali regional forces attacked the areas of Haruk and Gewane using heavy weapons including machinegun and rocket propelled grenades. Children and women were killed while they were sleeping," added Ahmed.
- Ali Abdel, a spokesperson for the Somali region, said 25 people had been killed on Friday and an unknown number of civilians died in subsequent attack by the same forces on Tuesday.
- Both sides deny having initiated the attacks and blame the other for the violence.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 06 April)

- The next round of GERD dam negotiations in Kinshasa has been extended, although no progress has been made.
- Sudan's foreign minister Mariam al-Sadig al-Mahdi says Ethiopia's insistence on unilateral moves represents a violation of international law.
- "Without a new approach to negotiations, there becomes space for Ethiopia to impose a fait accompli and put all the people of the region in grave danger," added al-Mahdi.
- "This Ethiopian intransigence requires Sudan to consider all possible options to protect its security and citizens," said Sudan irrigation and water resources minister in a statement.

- Egyptian foreign minister also said: “This position reveals once again Ethiopia’s lack of political will to negotiate in good faith.”
- Sudan has asked the United Nations to withdraw Ethiopian peacekeepers from Abyei State. “We have no confidence in the Ethiopian army in the Abyei State and we want the army to leave Abyei as soon as possible,” said Sudan’s foreign minister, Mariam al-Sadig al-Mahdi.
- According to the Minister, Ethiopia has shown a firm stance on GERD negotiations and the tripartite talks in Kinshasa ended without agreement because Ethiopia did not want it.
- “Ethiopia has a lot of interest in Sudan and Sudan will use alternative options to secure its interests,” she added.
- The Minister also said: “Sudan has understood Ethiopia’s internal problems and has been patient for a long time. We have accepted tens of thousands of Ethiopian refugees, but now we will focus on safeguarding our national interests.”
- Reports of Egyptian, that Sudanese fighter jets fly over the Nile River in training drill.

Reported International situation (as per 06 April)

- A report by the World Peace Foundation (WPF) documents how Ethiopian and Eritrean belligerents in the war in Tigray have comprehensively dismantled the region’s economy and food system.
- The report emphasizes the need of urgent life-saving assistance for the humanitarian disaster and urges all the belligerents to place the survival and welfare of the affected people above political and military goals.
- The WPF report states regardless of who is responsible for the outbreak of hostilities, the sole reason for the scale of the humanitarian emergency is that the coalition of Ethiopian Federal forces, Amhara regional forces, and Eritrean troops are committing crimes of starvation on a large scale.
- The report has six sections and looks into the current humanitarian emergency in Tigray and says that it is likely that the populations of Central and Eastern zones of Tigray have been suffering elevated mortality rates over the last two months due to the effects of hunger, acute malnutrition and disease.
- The report also said that, although there are no validated methods for extrapolating mortality estimates from acute food security analysis, a figure in the range 50-100 excess deaths per day is credible.
- In conclusion, WPF said that the governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea are starving the people of Tigray.
- WPF also says it has circumstantial evidence suggesting that this is intentional, systematic and widespread. Full content of the report can be accessed [here](#).
- The United States State department has said is looking into the reports the extrajudicial killings committed by the Ethiopian Army. This comes after a video appeared showing executions by soldiers.
- Finnish Foreign Minister and EU Envoy to the Horn Haavisto has met with his Saudi, Faisal bin Farhan counterpart in Riyadh. They discussed regional challenges, as well as the conflict raging in Tigray. They both agreed to “bridge the gap between parties” and support mediation efforts.
- Haavisto said the humanitarian crisis in Tigray needs quick solutions.
- Haavisto will brief the European Council after visiting Ethiopia. The European Council will take place on 19 April.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 122 - 08 April 2021

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Sexual Violence and Rape (as per 07 April)

- Several refugees in Sudan told AP that they watched or listened helplessly as women were taken away by Amhara or Eritrean fighters and raped. Adhanom Gebrehanis said it was like taunting, who had arrived in Hamdayet with welts from being beaten by Eritrean soldiers on his back.
- "They do these things openly to make us ashamed," he said. He watched Eritrean soldiers pull aside 20 Tigrayan women and rape them. The next day, only 13 were returned. "Go" Adhanom said the Eritreans told the others: "We already have what we want."
- Another rape victim said her home in Humera was looted and she was sized by the Amhara militia. She was beaten to the ground for speaking her native Tigrigna by at least three men. "Let the Tigray government come and help you," she recalled them saying.
- She added the Amhara militia proposed to her that: "Claim to be Amhara and we will give back your house and find you a husband. But if you claim to be Tigrayan, we will come and rape you again."
- "One mother and daughter had been forced to watch each other," she said. "One woman was raped on the road, with people watching. Other accounts were worse than mine."
- A midwife from Adwa, cried as she recalled a 60-year-old woman who was raped vaginally and anally by Eritrean soldiers and then waited days, trying to hide the bleeding, before seeking help.
- The midwife told AP that another woman was raped by four Eritrean soldiers while her husband hid under the bed. And her husband recounted the attack when they sought an abortion.
- Another midwife from Humera, befriended seven women from the same village, Mai Gaba, who said they were raped separately by various fighters, including the Ethiopian federal forces.
- "This is to harm the community psychologically," said the midwife. They say: "Most of the people in Tigray support the (fugitive Tigray leaders). To destroy them, you must destroy Tigrayans."

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 07 April)

- The Associated Press (AP) report says Tigrayans who fled to Sudan have brought proof of an official attempt at what is being called ethnic cleansing in the form of a new identity card that eliminates all traces of Tigray.
- AP has spoken to nine refugees and written in a language not their own, issued by authorities from another ethnic group, the ID cards are the latest evidence of a systematic drive by the Ethiopian government and its allies to destroy the Tigrayan people.
- Many refugees told the AP that Amhara authorities and allied forces in western Tigray have taken over whole communities, ordering Tigrayans out or rounding them up.
- A nurse, told AP that the Amhara authorities now in charge of the nearby city of Humera took his original Tigrayan ID card and burned it.
- His new ID card was examined by AP and was issued in January with Amharic language, an Amhara stamp and even the word Tigray had vanished. "I kept it to show the world," he said.
- He added that only 10 Tigrayans remained of the roughly 400 who worked at the hospital where he had been employed, the rest killed or fleeing. "This is genocide... Their aim is to erase Tigray."
- Another refugee, a 30-year-old who crossed the Tekeze river in early March, told AP that bodies were laid scattered near the riverbank. She estimated around 50 corpses. "Some were face-down and some were looking up at the sky," she added.

- She also said a sympathetic woman from the Wolkait ethnic group pleaded with Eritrean soldiers near the river to let Alem cross, while urging her to pretend to be Wolkait.
- Alem said her home in Humera was occupied by Amhara militia and when she asked them for her clothes, they had been burned. "Their aim is to leave no Tigrayan," she said. "I hope there will be a Tigray for my children to go home to."
- Power is back in Mekelle, regional capital, after a week of blackout in the whole Tigray region.
- The Telegraph has received the testimonies of 18 people on a massacre in Abi Addi on February 15th.
- Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers surrounded the village and killed 182 people. They went from house to house and killed civilians.
- Survivors also told the Telegraph that people had been killed in Adi Asmiean, Bega Sheka, Adichilo, Amberswa, Wetlaqo, Semret, Guya, Zelakme, Arena, Mitsawerki, Yeqyer and Shilum Emni.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (as per 07 April)

- Ethiopia's Minister of Water, Irrigation and Energy, Dr Seleshi Bekele, said Egypt and Sudan's attempt to undermine the AU-led negotiation on GERD is unacceptable.
- "A lot of time has been lost due to the strategy pursued by Cairo and Khartoum to delay negotiations and proposed removal of South Africa from an observer role is a denial of dignity for AU," he added.
- The minister said: "The two countries followed an approach that seeks to undermine the AU-led process and to take the matter out of the African platform." He added that the second filling of the GERD reservoir will continue as planned and Ethiopia expects negotiations to be completed within 8 weeks.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 07 April)

- Reports of the Sudanese army repelled an Ethiopian attack near the Umm Rakuba border area.
- The head of Sudanese Sovereign Council, al-Burhan held a meeting with senior officers of the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and briefed them on the political and military situation of the country.
- Sudan's Irrigation and Water Resources Minister, Yasir Abbas said all options are open in front of Sudan to deal with the GERD crisis, including to seek the UN Security Council's support. "The issue of the GERD affects Sudan's national security and has regional repercussions," added Abbas.
- Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi said his country would not allow Nile water supply to be disrupted, warning that all options are open to deal with the Ethiopian dam crisis. "I say to our Ethiopian brothers, there is no need to reach a level that you mess with a water drop of Egypt's [Nile] water because all options are open" added Al-Sisi.
- Al-Sisi noted that Egypt continues to coordinate with Sudan and the world to emphasize on the justice of our cause. "We understand the issue of development for the African countries relying on water, but with the condition not to affect Egypt's water rights," he added.
- Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shukri also said that both Egypt and Sudan show a great amount of flexibility but was stuck with Ethiopia's rejection. He added that both countries would seek international bodies after the talks failed in Kinshasa.

Reported International situation (as per 07 April)

- EU Envoy Pekka Haavisto has arrived in Ethiopia. After meeting with the Ethiopian President, Pekka Haavisto expressed his deep concerns on the violence against women in Tigray. He added the EU calls for an end to all violence and reiterated the importance of investigations on human rights violations and accountability.
- EU UN said the humanitarian situation in Tigray remains very serious, threatening to destabilise the Horn of Africa. For the EU, helping to stop the human rights abuse in Tigray and restore peace in Ethiopia is a high priority.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 123 - 09 April 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 08 April)

- Ethiopian and Eritrean forces are leaving Wukro Maray and Selekleka, due to pressure by TDF.
- Reports that seven civilians were killed by Eritrean forces in Freweyni town, Eastern Tigray.
- TMH reported that over 30 civilians were killed by Eritrean troops in Hawzen, Eastern Tigray.
- Reported that more than 200 civilians were also killed by Eritrean and Ethiopian forces around Wukro Maray between Shire and Axum.
- Reports of Tigrayan ethnic monks displaced from Waldeba Monastery with welts from being beaten by Amhara forces circulate in social media.
- More than 900 internally displaced monks were believed to be residing in Shire town.
- The Financial Times (FT) has spoken to Gezae Wolderaphael, who fled from Mai Kadra, western Tigray and now an IDP in Mekelle, says he was beaten by a rifle butt and knife on his face and shoulder. "They put a gun in my mouth," he adds, before stabbing him and leaving him for dead in the street.
- Solomon Hailselassie, a young farmer who fled from Mai Kadra, blamed the Amhara militia who he says targeted Tigrayans. "Kill them all. Leave nobody from age seven to 70 alive," he heard people he identified as Amhara militia members saying. He says he lost 15 friends in two days of violence.
- Solomon said: "I saw it when they cut a guy's arms and legs and slit his throat. But they didn't kill, they left him there. They wanted him to suffer."
- Chidi Odinkalu, senior manager for Africa with the Open Society Foundations told FT that: "Clearly the economic miracle is over and I don't think anybody knows where this is going. Frankly, I don't think Abiy knows where this is going."
- Reported that Eritrean troops entered the Tigray Northern town of Adigrat on 18 November 2020 after heavy fighting that started on 17 November 2020 when a lot of people were killed or run away.
- Reported that on Saturday 19 November 2020 entered Adigrat with ten tanks and "were killing anyone in the streets". The witness says "we were about 5.000 people and about 300 were under fire and some were killed and others injured.
- The Eritrean troops attacked a place for Eritrean refugees arriving from Eritrea in Adigrat. They killed six Eritrean refugees, while there was heavy fighting. Their names are known to the witness.
- According to the witness, the Eritrean troops rounded up Eritrean and Tigray people and told them to get their shoes. They then took them by foot to Edaga Hamus to Sarha, near Zalembeza.
- Once the group had arrived in Zalembeza, they were split and Eritrean refugees were deported to Eritrea. A group of 60 Eritreans escaped and were helped by local people.
- The group went to Irob and stayed until 2 January 2021. On that day they were praying in a church when fighting started. A lot of people were hurt. The troops were Eritrean fighters.
- During the shooting young children were killed and the eye witness saw children killed of 11, 12 years old. There were 37 people killed according to the eye witness. The eye witness has fled Tigray.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (as per 08 April)

- The Ministry of Peace of Ethiopia has hired a second lobbying firm amid escalating U.S. criticism of the country's handling of the conflict in Tigray region.

- Peace Minister Muferiat Kamil signed a six month, \$45,000-a-month contract with global law firm Holland and Knight on March 12, 2021.
- The contract with lobby firm Holland and Knight comes a little over a month after the Ethiopian Embassy in Washington hired lobbying firm Venable for a 35,000-per-month contract, for an initial three months.
- The firm will provide strategic counsel and federal government relations assistance for Congress and the Joe Biden administration. It is thought that concern in Ethiopia is growing over further sanctions.
- The Ethiopian National Defense Force said the recently released video of Mahbere Diego showing killing of innocent civilians in Tigray is a complete fabrication and drama orchestrated by TPLF junta.
- Amnesty International and Belingcat has provided detailed evidence the video was real, and CNN and BBC carried out additional investigation into the killings.
- Communication affairs bureau of Amaro Woreda in the South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPR) said sustained attacks by armed groups left at least 12 civilians killed, eight injured and more than 11, 000 people internally displaced.

Reported International situation (as per 08 April)

- Uganda and Egypt have signed a “military intelligence sharing agreement”.
- Finish Foreign minister and EU envoy Haavisto is warning that the situation in Tigray could lead to a second migration crisis in Europe.
- The instability that the conflict is creating in Africa, could lead to exploitation by non-state actors such as Al-Qaeda. The turbulence is fuelling radicalisation. The security issue is not confined to the Tigray region, Ethiopia has been a key partner in fighting terrorism in many other regions.
- USAID has announced more than \$152 million in additional humanitarian assistance to the people affected by the Tigray crisis.
- White House national security advisor Jake Sullivan expressed U.S. concern over the crisis in the Tigray region in a call with Ethiopia’s deputy prime minister, Demeke Mekonen.
- The two discussed critical steps to address the crisis, including expanded humanitarian access, cessation of hostility, departure of foreign troops and independent investigation into atrocities and human rights violations.
- IOM estimates that Ethiopia has over 1.82 million IDPs across 1298 sites.
- A recent survey by the research group Humanitarian Outcomes, shows that less than half of respondents in Tigray have received humanitarian aid. 96% of people said that they needed aid.
- Those that did receive humanitarian aid say that it is not enough. It was conducted by phone.
- Approximately 40% of people believe that the government or the military is restricting the distribution of aid. Another 30% does not know what is limiting the distribution of aid, while 20% believe it is due to insecurity.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 124 - 12 April 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 11 April)

- Multiple fires were detected within a settlement in northwest Dansha, Tsegede district, Western Tigray.
- Reported that ethnic profiling and arrests of Tigrayas has continued in Addis Ababa.
- Reported that fresh deployment of Eritrean forces has continued towards Eastern Zone of Tigray.
- Unconfirmed reports that the Prosperity Party (PP) have decided to arrest Tigrayan social media activists living in Addis Ababa.
- In a video interview, members of the Amhara militia and Fano said: "In collaboration with our bosses, we eliminated anyone who objected to our rules in the Debark zone, near the border of Tigray region."
- In the video, the Amhara militants stated: "We have invaded and handed over a large land including Tekeze River to May Tsebri administrator. We have also erected our flag on Tekeze River bridge."
- "We have given new Amhara ID cards to all residents of the area (Western Tigray) and make sure everybody smells Amhara," added the Amhara militants.
- The Amhara militants also said: "We are surprised by the new enemies armed with snipers and modern weapons in the Metekel Zone of the Benishangul Gumuz region and Kemise area of the Oromia Special Zone in the Amhara region."
- On the night of 07 March 2021, Eritrean troops kidnapped 4 Eritrean refugees from Zone 3 and 4 of Adi Harush refugee camp.
- And on the night of 08 March 2021, the Eritrean troops kidnapped another 5 refugees. One of them was from the Kunama ethnic group, recently relocated from Shimelba camp and was working as a volunteer at the Shimelba hospital.
- The Eritrean ethnic Kunama, Mr. Adisso, a father of three, was forcibly taken from his family. His sister tried to fight back with the troops but she was stabbed by a knife around her hand by one of the troops.
- The other 8 refugees were ethnic Tigrinya and were recently relocated from Hitsats camp.
- Most refugees feel insecure in the camp while the UNHCR and Agency for Returnees and Refugees Affairs (ARRA) are reluctant to provide protection, especially during the night time.
- Reported that Ethiopia's Agency for Returnees and Refugees Affairs (ARRA) has relocated hundreds of Eritrean refugees who were living inside the school of May Ayni camp to Adi Harish camp.
- According to sources, most of the relocated refugees were not happy due to the security risk at Adi Harish camp and continued kidnapping by Eritrean troops.
- Most of the refugees are also afraid that the relocation by the Ethiopian government might be a prearranged plan to get them closer to the border so that kidnapping will be easy for Eritrean troops.
- Some Eritrean refugees have refused to be relocated and are currently staying near May Ayni camp by renting houses.
- An Eritrean witness who was in Akum on Nov. 28-29, 2020 told TMH that Eritrean and Ethiopian forces heavily bombed the city of Akum on 19-20 Nov. 2020. "I saw when the University of Axum and Anbessa Hotel was shelled. As the shelling was very intensive, we went underground," said the witness.
- Human Rights Watch has said Akum was bombed on 20 November.
- The witness said: "After fighting with the Tigray militia on Nov. 28, 2020 at May Koho, later in the afternoon Eritrean troops were shooting everyone they found in the streets of Akum."

- “They were killing everyone they found, including those who were returning from the church. It was on Saturday and I saw many dead bodies in the street,” said the witness. “They also killed my friend who was with me in the underground of the hotel when he left the hotel to check his family.”
- The witness says on Sunday morning (Nov. 29/2020), they took 6-7 bodies and buried them at Arba’etu Ensessa Church. “There was also a body of a woman brought by people, but elders came and told us to leave the area saying Eritrean troops have started killing anyone they found on the street and we ran away,” added the witness. “I am not sure if the woman was buried.”
- The witness states that during the 24-hours mass execution, Eritrean soldiers were distributed in the whole city and went house to house killing everyone they found.
- “Next to the house I was staying in, I heard kids crying because their families were killed. The soldiers also knocked on my door asking me to open but I didn’t and thanks to God they left,” said the witness.
- The witness estimated the number of people killed within two days in Axum around a thousand.
- The witness said Eritrean troops were looting boutiques, mobile shops, hotels and jewelry shops. “I heard Ethiopian federal troops telling the Eritreans to stop looting and the Eritreans replied we were told to loot by your government so we are doing our job,” added the witness.

Reported Situation in the Horn region(as per 11 April)

- Ethiopia’s Deputy Prime Minister has met with EU Envoy Haavisto and discussed the situation in Tigray.
- According to Al-Arabiya, the Sudanese Sovereignty Council said: “We will not give up areas in Al-Fashaga because they are our lands. We don’t want to go to war with Ethiopia, but if it is imposed on us, we will win because we are right.”
- A Senior Sudanese official rejected an initiative by the UAE to settle the border dispute with Ethiopia saying it aims to divide the claimed Al-Fashaga area between the two countries.
- “The UAE wants to divide our land and we will not accept that,” said Malik Agar member of the Sovereign Council and SPLM-N faction leader.
- The former rebel leader added: “The UAE wants to distribute our land. This is a biased initiative that will cast its shadow and repercussions on the region.”
- According to several Sudanese officials, the UAE proposed to withdraw the Sudanese troops from the border, divide the income of the UAE investment projects in Al-Fashaga by 40% for Sudan, 40% for the Emirates and 20% for Ethiopia farmers.
- Sudan Tribune (ST) says the Sudanese army will hand over dozens of Ethiopian militiamen and soldiers arrested during sporadic clashes on the Sudanese-Ethiopian border.
- “The military and administrative arrangements in the 2nd Infantry Division Command have been completed to release 60 Ethiopian prisoners of the army and Amhara militias,” said ST.
- The ST report said those Ethiopian forces were arrested by Military Intelligence inside Sudanese territory in Al-Fashaga where they attacked Sudanese farmers and herders over the past six months.
- Sudan has also declined an Ethiopian offer to share data on the second filling of GERD before reaching a legally binding agreement. Egypt has adopted a similar position.
- Alex de Waal argues in an article in Responsible Statecraft that the Biden agenda in Tigray is not working. While it has adopted good goals to achieve, Eritrea and Ethiopia have taken sufficient measures to look like they are de-escalating the situation, yet not actually ending the conflict.

Reported International situation (as per 11 April)

- German Foreign Minister, Heiko Mass has spoken with Ethiopia’s deputy prime minister and said: “We are deeply worried about the conflict in Tigray. Full access for humanitarian assistance and the protection of civilians are of utmost importance.”

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 125 - 13 April 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 12 April)

- Reported that fresh deployment of Eritrean troops through Mereb River, Rama to Tigray towns of Adwa and Axum has continued.
- Dedebit Media reported that at least 5 youths were killed and another 20 severely wounded by Eritrean troops in the town of Adwa, Central Tigray.
- The event, which has also been reported by two other sources, saw Eritrean soldiers passing through Axum have been shooting from their vehicles, killing civilians on the road.
- In another village near Axum another 11 have reportedly been killed.
- According to Tigray Media House (TMH), another 15 young unarmed men were killed by Amhara militia and ENDF soldiers in Hugumbrda, Southern Tigray.
- TMH reported that Prime Minister Abiy has officially requested big international investors to buy him arm drones and in exchange he promised them a conducive investment environment.
- Reported that USAID vehicles were being used by Prosperity Party (PP) officials and ENDF commanders in Tigray.
- TMH said new reports are coming out from Wukro Maray town near Aksum that over 300 civilians including priests were killed by Eritrean troops from three villages only.
- The killings in the three villages mainly focused on religious leaders, priests, deacons and elders and they were killed while providing church services and prayers.
- Kidane Amene, Former chairperson of Baytona, an opposition party in Tigray, has joined the Tigray defense forces and said the struggle is for an independent state Tigray.
- The newly published UNHCR report says that at least 350 thousand IDPs have arrived in Shire town alone. 75 thousand of those have arrived from Western Tigray.
- Many thousands are still dispersed in the countryside.
- According to a UNHCR mission at least 2 thousand Eritrean refugees are living as IDPs in Adigrat.
- There are also at least 82 thousand IDPs in Mekelle.
- The UNHCR and WFP have also started a joint rehabilitation of 56k of roads serving Um Rakuba and Tunadybah as well as extensive drainage works as part of flood mitigation activities ahead of the rainy season.
- A video footage showing an attack by a mob on a Gumuz ethnic man in Chagni town of the Amhara region circulates in social media. They dragged him out of a Bajaj vehicle and beat him to death.

Reported Situation in the Horn region(as per 12 April)

- Sudan will receive \$ 400 million in aid from Saudi Arabia and the UAE for agriculture according to state media.

- During his meeting with Egyptian foreign minister, Russia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergey Lavrov revealed that his country had proposed technical assistance in the Ethiopia dam negotiation, but there was no call for mediation.
- The Egyptian Foreign Affairs minister has warned Ethiopia that they will take serious measures to protect water security in Egypt.
- He stresses that a "just solution" needs to be found for everyone.
- Ethiopia's Foreign minister has said that the remaining concerns are "technical issues". Security, and data exchange has already been arranged.

Reported International situation (as per 12 April)

- The European Parliament's Committee on Development will meet on Tuesday 13 April with Haavisto, the EU envoy to the Horn region. They will exchange views on his most recent visit to the area.
- Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner for Crisis Management will also be present.
- Belgium's Minister of Development and Cooperation increases the funds for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) by €4 million for the victims of violence in Tigray.
- Belgium also stresses the importance of an independent investigation into the committed crimes, which cannot go unpunished.
- The executive director of the World Peace Foundation has argued in a piece that the World Bank and IMF should not be supporting the Ethiopian government.
- He argues that both organisations need to reconsider the loans and requests that Ethiopia is making. They should leverage the money for an improvement in the situation and end war and starvation.
- He argues that as the WPF has shown, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Amhara are using starvation as a weapon of war, and with only 1 million of the 5.6 million people receiving aid (which he says is stolen soon afterwards), mass starvation is going to take place soon.
- He further argues that the level of destruction which is seen in Tigray goes far beyond legitimate war aims, regardless of who started the conflict.
- Lastly he says that if the conflict drags on, many resources will be used, and will lead Ethiopia down the road of Authoritarianism. A long protracted conflict will also leave the country economically devastated, with huge costs to rebuild.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 126 - 14 April 2021

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Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 13 April)

- Fierce fighting between Eritrean troops and Tigray forces has been reported in the Central and North western zones of Tigray.
- TMH reported that ENDF's chief of staff, General Birhanu Jula has travelled to Asmara to meet his counterpart General Filipos Weldeyohanes of Eritrea.
- Reports of ENDF military forces reinforcement to the Southern and Mekelle areas of Tigray region.
- The spokesperson of Tigray defence forces told Dimtsi Weyane (DW) International TV that on 05 April 2021, Tigray forces attacked the ENDF in Entecho, Central Zone and 11 soldiers were killed including Colo. Aynew Bedru, deputy division commander and 10 others were injured.
- The spokesperson added that on 08 April 2021, Tigray forces launched a sudden attack on an Eritrean forces convoy travelling from Adwa using a Volvo car and 35 Eritrean soldiers including a Colonel were killed and 45 were injured.
- "On 09 April 2021, an operation was undertaken in Adibelow, Eastern Tigray. Accordingly, Eritrean troops of 4 infantry divisions (39, 63, 17, 53); one Mechanized division (42), and one commando brigade of division 525 was attacked by Tigrayan forces," said the spokesperson.
- In the operation, 1720 Eritrean soldiers including Capt. Ibrahim Adem were killed, 1215 soldiers were injured and many RPGs, Snipers and other military equipment were captured.
- The spokesperson also said on 11 April 2021, the Tigray forces suddenly attacked a military convoy passing through Higumbureda, a place between Korem and Maychew, Southern Tigray. In the operation, 50 ENDF soldiers were killed and 73 have been injured. The cars were also burnt.
- In another event, on 8 April 2021 in Gereb Agew, 5 cars moving from Adi Keyih to Mekhoni, Southern Tigray were ambushed killing 70 ENDF troops and wounding more than 110.
- On 8 April 2021 in Ahferom, 35 Eritrean troops were killed, 45 wounded and a colonel was also killed.
- Tigrayan regional forces have claimed that they killed 12.500 people in the last two weeks alone.
- MSF says in the morning of 12 April 2021, 18 wounded people were brought to the MSF supported Kidane Meheret hospital in Adwa, Central Tigray.
- Later, 11 critically injured patients were transferred to Axum hospital, a facility also supported by MSF.
- According to MSF, injured patients say soldiers opened fire on them near Adwa bus station.
- MSF said it is concerned about the ongoing violence in Tigray and urges for respect of people's lives.
- Reported that the drinking water system of many areas in the Tigray region was intentionally destroyed by the Ethiopian and Eritrean forces.
- Many water pump generators were also looted by Eritrean troops.
- Reported that veterinary clinics which were providing health service to livestock in the Central Zone of Tigray have been looted and destroyed by Ethiopian and Eritrean forces.
- An ENDF General, Bacha Debele says the junta group (TPLF), which was operating in eight areas of the Tigray region, was completely destroyed.
- "In the Tigray region, small trainers and junta leaders' guards were attacked and arrested," adds Bacha.

- Five months ago, ENDF's chief of staff, Gen. Birhanu Jula, said "the junta group" had been destroyed.
- Reported that Commander of ENDF's Northern Command, General Belay Seyoum has been removed from his post by the order of senior Eritrean commanders.
- Reported that General Kindu Geazu is appointed as Commander of the ENDF's Northern Command.
- Tghat has published an article which refutes the idea that ENDF troops are not committing crimes in Tigray. Instead it says ENDF troops are committing as many crimes, if not more than Eritrean troops.
- Among others, Ethiopian troops have committed massacres in Mahbere Dego, Debre Abay, Bora Selowa, Adi Hageray, and Chercher.
- ENDF troops have also been involved in indiscriminate shelling of towns and cities, including Mekelle.
- A recent OCHA report says that at least half of Tigray remains hard to reach. The remaining parts of the region are partially accessible. Only Mekelle and its surrounding regions are "accessible".
- The same report says that 700 thousand people in need are in accessible areas, over 3 million in partially accessible areas, and over 500 thousand people in areas that are difficult to access.

Reported Situation in the Horn region(as per 13 April)

- Djibouti says the conflict in Tigray is hampering economic recovery and cooperation in the region.
- Ethiopia accuses Sudan as the main actor in jeopardizing the peace and security of the Horn of Africa.
- Egyptian Foreign Minister, Sameh Shoukry has informed UN SD of Ethiopia's disputed dam situation.

Reported International situation (as per 13 April)

- EU envoy to the Horn of Africa and Finnish Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto says human rights violations are ongoing in Tigray.
- He said it was very clear that civilian victims are still coming into the hospital and it is totally overcrowded at the moment. Other health systems have been looted or destroyed.
- The envoy also said he did not see a military solution to the conflict.
- USAID says they are airlifting 1,500 rolls of heavy-duty plastic sheeting to contribute to emergency shelter efforts for more than 82,500 people affected by the ongoing conflict in Tigray region.
- According to the USAID an estimated one million people have fled their homes many of whom are now sleeping outside or in crowded shelters.
- "It is critically important that all parties ensure unhindered humanitarian access, but humanitarian assistance alone will not address the root of this crisis," USAID added.
- The USAID urges an immediate end to the conflict and cessation of hostilities, immediate and complete withdrawal of Eritrean forces, and an end to the deployment of Amhara regional forces in Tigray are essential first steps.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 127 - 15 April 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Minors reported in the war in Tigray (as per 14 April)

- In a video broadcasted by TMH, Biniam Fistum, a 15-year-old Eritrean soldier captured by the Tigray forces says he was forcibly taken from his home town Keren, Anseba Zone of Eritrea.
- "I have completed grade 9 and we came to Tigray by night. They haven't told us whether we were going to Tigray," said Biniam.
- He also said they were told that the war was finished and they could take military training inside Tigray.
- "It has been four months since we came to Tigray. And we took our military training near Hagerselam town, Central Tigray for four months," added Biniam.

Human rights violation in Tigray (as per 14 April)

- Amnesty International (AI) confirmed that Eritrean troops killed three people and injured at least 19 in an unprovoked attack on civilians in the center of Adwa town, central Tigray on 12 April.
- "Three people lost their lives and at least 19 are in hospital from an attack by the Eritrean troops. Deliberate attacks on civilians is prohibited by international humanitarian law and must stop," said Sarah Jackson, AI's Deputy regional Director for East Africa, the Horn and the Great Lakes.
- AI has spoken to witnesses and said Eritrean troops were passing through the town located in Central Tigray, when they suddenly opened fire at people on the main street close to the bus station.
- Six witnesses told AI that some of the injured were taken to Don Bosco hospital in Adwa town, and 19 of them were rushed to Aksum referral hospital for advanced medical care.
- A witness who works in the bus station told AI: "The Eritrean soldiers on the back of one Ural military truck and another heavy truck started shooting. We scattered into different directions. I hide in the drainage. We knew that they were Eritreans soldiers because they were swearing in Tigrigna, the heavy trucks had Eritrean number plates and Eritrean defense force camouflages. They were shooting from the backs of the moving trucks."
- "I was walking from my shop which is near the Pan-Africa hotel to the bus station. The shooting started immediately after the two trucks passed me. There were rickshaws on the road and the soldiers on the first truck were shouting in Tigrinya to the rickshaw drivers to clear off the road. Then the soldiers on the second truck started shooting. There were many people on the street," said another witness.
- According to a medical staff at Axum University Teaching and Referral Hospital, all of the people that were received at the hospital had either been shot in their chests, stomachs, legs, and hands, and six of them were in critical condition as of 13 April.
- "One girl was in shock due to blood loss, and that other patients had suffered broken hands and legs," added the medical staff.
- A third witness told AI: "The Eritrean soldiers came on two heavy trucks from the Adi Abun area. I was on the road just outside of my home when the shooting started at around 8am. It was sudden and I thought there was a gunfight going on in the area. In fact, there was no fighting but just shooting at passersby. One of the deceased was killed five metres from my home. He died instantly. I saw him."
- AI Deputy Director Africa, Sarah Jackson, says that AI is calling for an international investigation into this and other incidents and allegations of human right violation, including war crimes and possible crime against humanity, committed in the ongoing conflict in Tigray.

- “There must be justice and accountability for war crimes and human rights violations in Tigray. Ethiopia and Eritrea must fully cooperate with such investigations and ensure full reparation for victims and their families,” added Sarah Jackson.
- AI also said Eritrean troops continue to carry out atrocities in Tigray and had not left Tigray

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 14 April)

- Fresh deployment of Eritrean troops on 14/4/2021 to Tigray through Adiyabo and Rama has continued.
- Reports of ENDF troops reinforcement to Mekelle Tigray on 14/4/2021. Five Antonov planes were seen landing at Alula Abanega International Airport of Mekelle, Tigray.
- TMH reported that over 110 ENDF convoys including tanks have entered through Southern Tigray.
- OCHA report says alarming malnutrition rates are reported in Tigray region. And some displaced sites haven’t received food since the conflict started five months ago.
- The report said out of more than 69,000 children in Tigray screened for malnutrition, over 1,900 cases of severe acute malnutrition and over 17,700 cases of moderate malnutrition have been identified.
- “Over half of 605 pregnant and breastfeeding mothers screened in 10 districts in early March had moderate acute malnutrition, raising the risk of increased stillbirths, miscarriages, and maternal and neonatal mortality,” added the OCHA report.

Reported Situation in the Horn region(as per 14 April)

- Ethiopia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs says although Sudan is the current chair of IGAD, it is regrettable to see it as the main actor in jeopardizing the peace and security of the Horn of Africa.
- The statement added that Sudan has invaded Ethiopia territories, plundered and displaced civilians and is beating war drums to occupy even more lands.
- Sudan’s Prime Minister, Abdallah Hamdok has called his Egyptian and Ethiopian counterparts for a closed door meeting over the filling and operation of GERD.

Reported International situation (as per 14 April)

- According to diplomats, at the request of the United States, the UNSC is expected to discuss the situation in the Tigray region during closed consultations on 15/4/2021.
- Ms Pramila Patten, Special Representative of the UN SG on Sexual Violence in Conflict, told the UNSC that sexual violence continued to happen against women in Tigray region with a level of cruelty beyond comprehension.
- She also warned that sexual violence, including gang rape, are still happening in Tigray.
- US Ambassador to the UN, Linda Thomas-Greenfield urged members of the UNSC to pay a particular attention to deeply disturbing reports of mass rape and sexual violence being committed against women and girls in the war-torn Tigray region and hold the perpetrators to account.
- Ambassador Barbara Woodward, UK’s permanent representative to the UN, said the UK is particularly concerned by credible and widely corroborated reports of sexual violence in the Tigray region.
- The three diplomats were speaking at the UNSC open debate on "Women, peace and security: sexual violence in conflict" where members are discussing sexual violence in conflict, especially when used as a brutal tactic of war, has left multiple devastating consequences for survivors and their families.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 128 - 16 April 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported International situation (as per 15 April)

- The UN's top humanitarian official, Mark Lowcock told the UNSC in a briefing document that the UN and its humanitarian partner agencies have seen "no proof of the withdrawal of Eritrean forces" from the Tigray region and that the humanitarian situation in Tigray is worsening.
- Lowcock did say however that they have received reports that "Eritrean soldiers now wearing Ethiopian Defence Force uniforms." He continued to state that humanitarian staff also continue to report atrocities committed by Eritrean troops.
- One incident he mentioned was in Adwa where "Eritrean troops killed three people and injured at least 19 more in an unprovoked indiscriminate shooting".
- He also says that Eritrean soldiers are not the only perpetrators.
- Amhara militias have been actively attacking and killing Tigrayans as well. In some cases Amhara militias were spotted wearing ENDF uniforms as well.
- Lowcock reported that one agency estimated that "30% of all incidents against civilians involved some sort of sexual violence." The majority of these rapes are committed by men in uniform. He followed by saying that "Cases reported have involved Ethiopian National Defense Forces, Eritrean Defense forces, Amhara Special Forces, and other irregular armed groups or aligned militia."
- Nearly a quarter of the reports received involved gang rape, sometimes over periods of days. Girls as young as 8 have been targeted.
- He concluded by saying that "there is no doubt that sexual violence is being used in this conflict as a weapon of war, as a means to humiliate, terrorize and traumatize an entire population today and into the next generation."
- Human Rights Watch (HRW) says the UNSC needs to act on Ethiopia's Tigray region.

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 15 April)

- Fierce fighting between Eritrean troops and Tigray forces have been reported in Eastern Zone of Tigray.
- Reports of fighting between ENDF allied forces and Tigray forces in the Southern Zone of Tigray.
- Reported that more than 120 armoured vehicles of ENDF allied forces consisting of 23 buses, 50 Ural cars, 5 heavy artillery, 5 Zu-23, 39 patrol cars and 1 revolutionary pick up has passed through Adigrat towards Bizet and Enticho towns.
- Reported that over 150 ENDF convoys have passed through Alamata, Southern Tigray towards Woldia town, Amhara region.
- According to Ethiopian regional officials, Eritrean soldiers have killed nine civilians in Adwa. The official also said that the ENDF intervened to protect the town. There have been many reports from different sources and newspapers of shootings taking place near Adwa. However the number of casualties vary, and this is the first time ENDF soldiers have been reported taking part in the defence of the town.
- The spokesperson for PM Abiy has said that the Eritrean soldiers shooting on civilians might have been "TPLF fighters" wearing Eritrean uniforms.
- Dimtsi Weyane (DW) International reported that Tigray forces ambushing squad have captured four Eritrean troops and three Eritrean civilians in a spying mission holding Tigray identity card.
- In a launching meeting of Tigray Universities Forum, the Chief Interim Administration of Tigray region, Dr. Mulu Nega complained that the university community of the four universities in Tigray in general and Mekelle University in particular are in resistance to his administration.

- Dr. Mulu further reflected that even the University president is ashamed of calling his name properly in the students' graduation ceremony of Mekelle University.
- Fana Hagos Berhane (PhD), former President of Tigray Supreme Court has been appointed as President of Mekelle University replacing Professor Fetien Abay who has been serving as Acting President of the University since mid-September 2020.

Reported situation in Ethiopia (as per 15 April)

- The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia said only 25,000 of the 50,000 election posts are opened so far for the 6th election slated to 5 June 2021, though the voter's registration is left with only 8 days.
- Reports of fighting between Qemant ethnic group militias and Amhara forces in the North western part of the Amhara regional state.

Sexual and human rights violation in Tigray (as per 15 April)

- Reuters has spoken to a young mother who was trying to get home with food for her two children when she says soldiers pulled her off a minibus in Tigray region, claiming it was overloaded.
- The young mother said she was repeatedly raped by 23 soldiers who forced nails, a rock and other items into her vagina, and threatened her with a knife. Reuters said doctors showed them the bloodstained stone and two 3-inch nails they said they had removed from her body.
- "The woman, 27, is among hundreds who have reported that they were subjected to horrific sexual violence by Ethiopian and allied Eritrean troops since the war began in Tigray," said the doctors.
- Dr. Fasika Amdeselassie, Head of the Interim Health Bureau of Tigray region said some women were held captive for extended periods, days or weeks at a time.
- "Women are being kept in sexual slavery," said Fasika. "The perpetrators have to be investigated."
- Fasika said at least 829 cases of sexual assault have been reported at the five hospitals since the conflict in Tigray began. "Most of the women who have come forward are either pregnant or sustained severe physical injury from the rapes," said Fasika.
- Fasika added most of the region's health facilities are no longer functioning, and travel between towns remains dangerous.
- Further, eight doctors at five hospitals told Reuters that most of the rape victims described their attackers as either Ethiopian soldiers or Eritrean troops. "It was more common for women to report sexual violence by Eritrean soldiers," said the doctors.
- Reuters says they have interviewed 11 women who said they had been raped by soldiers from Eritrea, Ethiopia or both. Most didn't want to be identified due to fear of reprisals.
- Four said they were kidnapped, taken to military camps and gang raped, in some cases alongside other women. The women did not know the camp names but said they were located near Mekelle and the towns of Idaga Hamus, Wukro and Sheraro.
- Five other women said they were held in fields or deserted houses for up to six days. And two said they were raped in their own homes.
- Healthcare providers also shared details of nine other cases of sexual assault, including the ordeals of two 14-year-old girls.
- "This is being done to dishonour the women, to break their pride," said a doctor at Ayder Referral Hospital of Mekelle.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 129 - 19 April 2021

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Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 18 April)

- Eritrea told the UNSC that it has agreed to start withdrawing its troops from Ethiopia's Tigray region, acknowledging publicly for the first time the country's involvement in the war.
- The admission to the 15-member council comes a day after U.N. aid chief Mark Lowcock said the world body had not seen any proof that Eritrean soldiers have withdrawn.
- "As the looming grave threat has been largely thwarted, Eritrea and Ethiopia have agreed at the highest levels to start withdrawal of Eritrean forces and simultaneous redeployment of Ethiopian contingents along the international boundary," wrote Eritrea's U.N. Ambassador Sophia Tesfamariam.
- She said the allegation of the use of sexual violence and hunger as a weapon is false: "The allegations of rape and other crimes lodged against Eritrean soldiers is not just outrageous, but also a vicious attack on the culture and history of our people."
- In a recorded speech at Dimtsi Woyane (DW) International, the ousted President of Tigray state, Debretsion Gebremichael said Abiy's government "is ravaging" the people of Tigray using both the Ethiopian and foreign forces it has invited.
- He says the Ethiopian and foreign forces are conducting persistent attacks with the intention of exterminating the people of Tigray with bullets and hunger.
- "As we speak civilians are being mercilessly murdered in every corner only because they are Tigrayans. Tigrayan women are facing sexual violence that is difficult to imagine committed in any corner of the world," he added.
- He further said that the wealth and properties that the people of Tigray have created and accumulated in the last 30 years are being looted and destroyed by Ethiopian, Amhara and Eritrean forces.
- Reported that Ethiopian and Eritrean forces alongside the Amhara militia have started a major offensive on the Central, Northern and Northwestern part of Tigray region.
- Eritrean and Ethiopian forces are indiscriminately shelling villages and towns of these zones.
- Reports of ongoing renewed and intensified mass arrests and ethnic profiling of Tigrayans in Addis Ababa, particularly in the 22 area.
- Journalists Fitsum Berhane and Tamirat Yemane were re-arrested in Mekelle by members of the Ethiopian Federal Defense Forces (ENDF).
- The statement by the ENDF says they were arrested while live broadcasting what it described as "false propaganda" from their studio in a private house in Mekelle, the capital of Tigray region.
- The statement further said, officials within the Tigray Interim Administration leadership structure alleged to be working with anti-peace forces, were also detained in relation to the journalists arrests.
- Telecom, electricity and transport services are in complete shut down in Central, Northwestern and Western Zones of the Tigray region for a fourth day in a row.
- The Office of Interim Administration of Tigray told BBC that they received reports of people who have died of starvation from some areas of the region.
- However, the Federal National Disaster Risk Management Commission said the rumors that 150 people have died of starvation in Tigray Regional State are untrue.

- Former President of Mekelle University, Prof. Kindeya G/hiwot said in a tweet yesterday that trucks which were transporting facemasks and other protective equipment for Covid-19 to Tigray region were intentionally set on fire and destroyed by Ethiopian and Eritrean forces.
- The President added cars which were carrying medical supplies including ORS to be used for children in the Tigray region were systematically destroyed by ENDF allied forces.

Reported situation in the Horn region(as per 18 April)

- Eritrea's Minister of information, Yemane Gebremeskel said U.N. Coordinator in Eritrea and OCHA's representative to the country were summoned by Foreign Ministry of Eritrea.
- He says Eritrea strongly protests against wayward practices and fallacious reports issued by OCHA and a couple of other UN Agencies on basis of opaque affiliations with the TPLF.

Reported International situation (as per 18 April)

- Finnish Minister Pekka Haavisto and Dr. Debretsion Gebremichael discussed the situation in Tigray.
- Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield told the UNSC that the U.S. is gravely concerned regarding the deteriorating humanitarian and human rights situation in the Tigray region.
- The Ambassador says there are credible reports that Eritrean forces are re-uniforming as Ethiopian military in order to remain in Tigray indefinitely. "The Eritrean government must withdraw its forces from Ethiopia immediately," the ambassador added.
- "We are horrified by the reports of rape and other unseparably cruel sexual violence that continue to surface. The degradation and trauma associated with these attacks will have long-term effects on the affected communities," said the ambassador.
- She condemned all sexual violence and demands perpetrators be brought to justice.
- She also called for an end to hostilities and for the Ethiopian government to deliver upon a political settlement to the crisis; permit unhindered humanitarian access; allow for independent, international investigation into human rights abuses and violations; protect civilians; enact the immediate withdrawal of Eritrean and Amhara regional forces from Tigray; and hold those responsible for human rights violation accountable.
- Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield told Face the Nation that more has to be done by the US and its allies to address atrocities in Tigray, including systematic gang rapes of young girls. "We have to make sure that the victims hear our voices, but also the perpetrators know that we are concerned," she added.
- Jake Sullivan, National Security Advisor to the US President said the Tigray crisis and sexual violence demand attention and action.
- He added that the UNSC should speak with one voice in calling for an end to abuses and withdrawal of Eritrean forces from Tigray.
- Senator Chris Coons says he is disappointed that Prime Minister Abiy has not yet fulfilled his commitments to withdraw Eritrean forces, remove obstacles to humanitarian access and hold perpetrators of human rights abuses accountable.
- He also expressed his concern by the atrocities continuing to occur across Ethiopia inside and outside of Tigray.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 130 - 20 April 2021

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Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 19 April)

- Reported that Eritrean forces have allegedly executed wounded Eritrean troops in the fight with Tigray defense forces.
- Atse Yohannes secondary and preparatory school in Mekelle has been looted, vandalized and destroyed three to four times by Ethiopian and Eritrean forces including, the library, furniture, computers, power stations, over 80 plasma TVs and documentation.
- According to several people, Debretsion Gebremichael, the Chairman of the TPLF, has held discussions with the US and European officials.
- Debretsion Gebremichael also gave a statement (reported also in yesterday's edition) which was broadcasted by Dimtsi Weyane. He stated that the Tigrayan forces are strengthening and inflicting significant material and personnel damage to the ENDF and Eritrean forces.
- He also said Eritrea is in the process of sending more forces into Tigray instead of withdrawing.
- He rejected the involvement of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission in the investigation process of the atrocities
- He called upon the international community to take appropriate measures to hold the invading forces accountable, especially Isaias Afewerki and Abiy Ahmed, and to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the displaced people of Tigray.
- He demanded that the Eritrean Defense forces stop further atrocities on the innocent Tigrayans and challenged them to ask why they are dying in this senseless war against Tigray. He said that if they surrender, the people of Tigray and its government will arrange a safe place.
- In an open letter, three Tigray political parties, SaWeT, Baytona, and TIP, call for an internationally monitored withdrawal from Tigray.
- They say that the conflict has claimed "hundreds of thousands of lives", left millions displaced and left tens of thousands of women subjected to sexual abuses.
- They call on the international community to ensure that Eritrean troops comply with the demands to withdraw. This needs to be monitored internationally.
- France24 has published a story on a video which shows the aftermath of a woman that has been sexually assaulted. The video was filmed in Adigrat, after the woman was brought there. She was found semi-conscious on the road after being raped allegedly by multiple Eritrean soldiers.
- France24 also says that Eritrean soldiers later came to the hospital to kill her, however she was safely evacuated.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (as per 19 April)

- Reported that over 40 members of the Ethiopian Federal Police including senior commanders have defected to Sudan.
- The Ethiopian ministry of defense has decided the Oromo Special, South Wollo and North Shewa zones of the Amhara regional state to be under a command post.

- Opposition parties in the Somali regional state of Ethiopia have threatened to boycott the upcoming election citing massive fraudulent activities on the voters registration process.
- Major parties including The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), Freedom and Equality party (FEP), and Ethiopian Citizens for Social Justice (EZEMA) together with independent candidates issued a joint statement explaining how the entire registration process has been hijacked and manipulated to the advantages of the ruling party, Ethiopian Prosperity Party branch in the Somali regional state.
- The opposition parties also stated that the prosperity Party (PP) have directly taken control of the processes by commanding both the board officials and public that the voters card need to be kept and not given out.
- “We have concrete proof in each location of the Somali regional state and submitted our complaints to the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE),” said one of the opposition officials.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 19 April)

- Sudan has called on the African countries to support its call for a legally binding agreement on the GERD before the second filling.
- “Today they threaten 20 million Sudanese and the national security of Sudan when they say that they will carry out the second filling without a legally binding agreement,” said Mariam al-Mahdi, foreign minister of Sudan.

Reported International situation (as per 19 April)

- EU High representative Borell has reiterated his concern for the situation in Tigray. He also said that the EU urgently calls for humanitarian access to the region. This was promised by the Ethiopian government, but according to Borell has not been not been “fulfilled”.
- Borell also said that he “hoped” that member states would look at possible decisions they can take if Ethiopia does not abide by its commitments regarding the situation in Tigray.
- “The Ethiopian government must show commitment to the organization of a national dialogue in the run up to the elections,” said Mr Borrell.
- The EU also announced a further 53.7 million in aid for the most vulnerable people in Ethiopia.
- The EU Commissioner for Crisis Management, Janez Lenarčič, is scheduled to hold talks with Ethiopian officials on Tuesday (20/04/2021).
- “The conflict in the Tigray region has exacerbated an already difficult situation in Ethiopia. Humanitarian needs – like food security, health and shelter – are growing. Violence is increasing in several parts of the country,” said Lenarčič.
- He also said the situation in Tigray remains severe despite slight improvements, keeping millions of people in need of assistance. The key priority therefore remains to ensure humanitarian access to all those in need in Tigray.
- He added that the safety and security of humanitarian personnel must be ensured, in accordance with International Humanitarian Law (IHL). We continue to call for the respect of IHL, including the obligation to protect civilians and for the perpetrators of all attacks on civilians to be brought to justice.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 131 - 21 April 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 20 April)

- Fierce fighting between Ethiopian and Eritrea allied forces and Tigray defense forces was reported in Central and Northwestern parts of Tigray.
- Ethiopian MI-35 helicopter gunship was shot down by Tigray forces near Abi-Adi, Central Tigray. The pilot, Col. Lemma Tafese, deputy commander of the Eastern Air Base Division was reportedly killed.
- Reported that the newly appointed mayor of Wukro town, eastern Tigray has been killed.
- The Office of the Interim Administration of Tigray says the Amhara region government is relocating displaced ethnic Amhara's from the Metekel zone to Western Tigray.
- The Velocity Textile Factory in Mekelle was completely looted and destroyed by ENDF allied forces.
- Reported that aid workers who were stopped by Eritrean troops in Adigrat, Tigray are being told that: "We don't care if you work for the UN or USAID, we will burn your cars if you go beyond this point."
- A recent CARE assessment found that the food situation in a number of areas of eastern Tigray is truly alarming, with little or no agricultural inputs available for people to recover over the coming months.
- CARE Ethiopia Country Director, Esther Watts said: "This is an area that was already suffering from food security issues before the conflict, with amongst the worst malnutrition and stunting rates in the country even beforehand."
- Watts also said northern and central parts of Tigray were hit by the locust swarms last year and this means that people in the region have no harvests to live off and nothing to plant during the upcoming planting season, leaving them in a truly dire situation.
- "These impacts are compounded by the psychological trauma and fear faced by household members on a daily basis," added Watts.
- Watts further says people urgently need food and nutrition support. Households in eastern Tigray rely heavily on livestock, daily labor and petty trade. The continued instability and fear of displacement and looting means many are not yet ready to begin reinvesting in other livelihoods.
- Many respondents in eastern Tigray told CARE that their immediate needs include food and nutrition support, non-food items (such as mattresses, blankets, kitchen utensils and jerrycans), health services, agricultural inputs, and, ultimately, peace.
- A woman interviewed by CARE said; "We move with our lives in our hands. A person's life is like a plastic bag worth 10 cents, like something you don't try to catch when the wind is taking it."
- A group discussant from eastern Tigray told CARE that: "We don't know where to go, all places are like fire. It is better to die than live like this."
- "I saw my daughter very troubled one day and tried to understand her problem and she told me she has nothing to use for her menstruation and I told her to tear a part of the bed sheet we have and use it," said a female group discussant.
- Another group discussant said: "We have seen worse than death and it doesn't matter if we die."

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (as per 20 April)

- Clashes between people belonging to Ethiopia's two largest ethnic groups, the Oromo and Amhara, killed at least 18 people late last week.
- Jemal Haasen, head of the Amhara region's Jile-Timuga district of Oromo Special Zone says the latest incident happened in the north of the country, Ataye town in Amhara region after Amhara's security forces killed a shopkeeper.

- "Then everyone went to their house and brought their rifles and that is how the clash began," he said, referring to civilians fighting Amhara security forces.
- He also said: "Only in one health post, I have seen 53 people who were injured, and 18 people killed. All of them are from Oromo ethnic groups."
- Protests were held in multiple cities and towns of the Amhara regional state denouncing reports of target attacks against the Amhara community.
- Protesters were carrying banners denouncing the attacks as well as the ruling Prosperity Party (PP) with crowds chanting "it doesn't represent us."
- The protests came in the wake of the latest violence in the Oromo Special zone, South Wollo and North Shewa zones of the Amhara region, which are now under the federal army command post.
- Many protesters were chanting messages denouncing Prime Minister Abiy who is increasingly being blamed for failing to stop the attacks.
- Some carried banners blaming PM Abiy for the multiple assassinations of senior regional officials including the president Ambachew Mekonnen and the regional attorney general Migbaru Kebede.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 20 April)

- Sudan called for the intervention of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to dissuade Ethiopia from carrying out the second filling of the GERD before concluding a legally binding agreement.
- In the letter to the UNSC, Sudanese Foreign Minister Mariam al-Mahdi said Ethiopia's decision to unilaterally carry out the second filling will deepen the crisis and miss opportunities to reach an amicable solution.
- Somali President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed said he was willing to negotiate with stakeholders in Somalia's political crisis in order to find a solution.
- Through his Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Farmaajo said the federal government of Somalia welcomes the African Union (AU) to facilitate the talks.

Reported International situation (as per 20 April)

- The EU Commissioner for Crisis Management, Janez Lenarčič, has discussed with the Ethiopian foreign minister, Demeke Mekonen and conveyed his grave concern over the critical humanitarian situation in Tigray and urged further improvements of the humanitarian access.
- He also urged the withdrawal of the Eritrean forces and called for cessation of hostilities.
- The Biden Administration voiced increasing concern about the reported atrocities committed in Tigray.
- Emily Dakin, USAID official said: "Humanitarians absolutely need unhindered access to populations in need, and we are concerned that there are populations that we haven't yet been able to reach."
- Dakin said members of the U.S. Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), have not directly experienced conflict, but ongoing fighting makes it challenging to ensure that we are able to support our partners to have the safe and consistent access they need to really be able to respond to some of the pretty dire humanitarian needs that we're seeing.
- Member of the UK parliament, Rachel Hopkins urged the disgraceful human rights abuses and gender-based violence (GBV) in Tigray must be stopped.
- Education Cannot Wait (ECW) announced US\$1 million in emergency education grant financing to benefit 20,000 children and youth impacted by the deteriorating humanitarian crisis in Tigray region.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 132 - 22 April 2021

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Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 21 April)

- Tigrayan TV Channel Dimtsi Weyane International has said that on April 16th, Eritrean and Ethiopian soldiers were defeated near Semema. According to the Dimtsi Weyane, 400 were killed and over 500 wounded.
- Since April 18, 2021, ferocious fighting is underway in the major fronts in Central and Northwestern Tigray.
- This offensive is reportedly being led by Eritrean minister of Defence, General Filippos Weldeyehanes, and Ethiopia's senior General Abebaw Tadesse.
- In this major offensive 27 infantry divisions, five mechanized divisions of EDF and 11 infantry, 4 mechanized divisions & 2 battalions of ENDF are engaged in the fighting.
- Reported that Ethiopia's compact helicopter Mi-35 downed by TDF in Guya.
- Doctors Without Borders have reported that they treated people that were wounded by Eritrean soldiers indiscriminately shooting in Adwa. DWB stated that the shooting took place on April 12.
- According to the organisation, 20 people were brought in, 12 of those were critically wounded.
- The people they spoke to all report that there was no military activity at all in the area when "soldiers wearing Eritrean uniforms" started shooting at civilians.
- The shooting of civilians in Adwa by Eritrean soldiers was reported multiple times last week by various sources.
- Active shooting took place in Mekelle, around Lachi bus station, on Wednesday. Several youths are reported to have been shot and killed when they tried to prevent looting by soldiers.
- MSF says that the road linking Adigrat and Axum in Tigray has been blocked for the last 12 days and it is hampering life-saving medical activities at MSF supported hospitals in Aksum as key supplies cannot be sent in.
- MSF also said the road blockage is affecting mobile clinics in rural areas outside of Aksum.
- MSF added Axum hospital is running out of supplies and they will run out in 3 days if nothing changes.
- MSF called the political and military authorities in Tigray and Ethiopia to allow essential supplies to be transported from Adigrat to Axum as soon as possible.
- There are blackouts in Central, Northwestern, and Western Tigray. This has been the case for the last five days.

Sexual and human rights violation in Tigray (as per 21 April)

- A report published by Al-Jazeera disclosed stories of displaced people from Western Tigray who were victims of rape, looting and extrajudicial killing allegedly perpetrated by Amhara forces.
- A woman told Al-Jazeera that the Amhara fighters in charge of her hometown of Humera and other disputed areas of western Tigray had just ordered all Tigrayans in her neighbourhood to leave their homes within 24 hours.
- "The militiamen who have been terrorising us for months, told us we are not allowed to live there anymore, because we are Tigrayans. They ordered us to leave empty-handed. They said all the properties we owned belong to Amharas, not to us" said the 34-year-old mother of three.

- The woman says after walking for 7 hours with her three children and a brother-in-law, they were stopped by four Amhara militiamen as they reached a bridge on Tekeze River. The Amhara men separated her from the children and brother and took her into an abandoned farmer's house and four of them took turns raping her.
- She added that after they finished, the militiamen inserted into her genitals a hot metal rod that burned her uterus. "I begged them to stop, she told Al-Jazeera, "I asked them, crying, why they were doing that to me. What wrong have I done to you?"
- "You did nothing bad to us," she said they told her. "Our problem is with your womb. Your womb gives birth to Woyane" This is a term used to refer to the TPLF: "A Tigrayan womb should never give birth."
- A doctor who treated her said: "The sexual assault made her infertile. Her bleeding has now stopped but she cannot walk and has to keep her legs spread."
- Doctors at the Ayder Referral Hospital said the number of rape cases on April 1 stood at 272. Within one week, it had jumped to 330.
- "Overall, 829 women have reported sexual assault to major hospitals of Tigray. The figure was 518 on April 1," said Hayelom Kebede, chief executive director of Ayder Referral Hospital.
- The UN says sexual violence is being used as weapon of war in Tigray region.
- UNICEF's James Elder says on CNN that the impact on women is devastating: "Some of these were groups of soldiers over multiple days in front of a child, or in front of a husband. What it does, is it shatters them."

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 21 April)

- Ethiopia has said that the way to move the GERD dam negotiations forwards is by involving the Bureau of the Assembly of the AU.
- In a letter to Sudanese PM Hamdok, Ethiopia has said that if "parties negotiate in good faith" results are possible and a "win-win" outcome can be achieved.

Reported International situation (as per 21 April)

- The U.S Embassy in Eritrea said Eritrean forces need to withdraw from deep in Tigray, where they are making a horrible humanitarian situation even worse.
- EU envoy to the region, Haavisto, has told EUobserver that the situation in the region is "dire".
- There are growing numbers of people being displaced, and these displacements are primarily based on ethnic grounds.
- Haavisto says that the conflict could lead to a new migration crisis if it is not tackled soon. Many refugees could end up moving towards Europe.
- EU High Representative Borell said that the EU wants to send an election-observation mission if the situation allows it. Ethiopian elections are due to take place in August.
- Borell also says that the election in Ethiopia should be preceded by a "national dialogue".
- UNICEF is warning that the conflict is depriving hundreds of thousands of children of their rights. The problem is even more acute for women and girls.
- The UNICEF spokesperson has said that the conflict is an education and nutrition emergency. He further said that the cases being reported are only the tip of the iceberg.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 133 - 23 April 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peace building, refugee protection and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 22 April)

- According to a source from within Eritrea, a lot of Eritreans are reportedly being sent to Tigray.
- Reported that Alula Hailu, Deputy Chairperson of Salsay Weyane Tigray Party and Kahsay Hailu, Finance head of the party were taken to an unknown place by Ethiopian soldiers in Mekelle.
- Fires were detected on MaySagla, Weri-Leake Woreda, Central Tigray on 21 April 2021 on satellite imagery. The area falls within active conflict between Tigray defense forces and ENDF allied forces.
- On 22 April 2021, multiple gunshots and heavy artillery were heard for hours in the outskirts of Mekelle, the capital of the Tigray region.
- Reported that trucks loaded with emergency food aid that were heading towards Nebelet and Hawzen, central and eastern Tigray are blocked by Eritrean troops.
- More than 800 Eritrean troops were reportedly destroyed by Tigray defense forces near Abi Adi, Central Tigray.
- Internet access and in many areas electricity remains cut in Tigray. Alex de Waal is urging that a priority is made to reestablish them. According to him it would help solve some of the most pressing issues.
- It would increase communications and thus the ability to provide humanitarian assistance. It would also provide protection for civilians and help prevent atrocities. Internet access would allow people to warn each other and flee for example. Thirdly access to the internet would allow Tigrayans to communicate with their family, and ensure each other's wellbeing. Lastly it would vastly improve the ability to investigate and look into alleged massacres.
- De Waal argues that the Ethiopian government would only be against this if they have something to hide. It is important to ensure that the situation can be properly monitored.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (as per 22 April)

- Demonstrations are taking place in multiple Amhara cities, denouncing targeted attacks against the Amhara community.
- According to the Addis Standard, "hundreds of thousands" are protesting attacks against ethnic Amhara in other regions of Ethiopia
- The Amhara Prosperity Party regional head denounced the protests, which has seen pictures of Prime Minister Abiy being torn apart, of being "hijacked" by the TPLF, OLF, and other anti-governmental forces.
- He also accused the main Amharic opposition party NaMA of being behind the protest and condemned their (political) attacks on federal and regional officials.
- The past year has seen increasing ethnic tension in Ethiopia. There has been an increase in ethnic violence, and many experts are warning that if a National dialogue does not take place soon, the situation could further deteriorate. This could eventually lead to the end of Ethiopia.

- Reports of clashes between residents and Amhara regional State police and Special Forces are coming from BahirDar city, the capital of the region.
- The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission has received reports that Sedal Woreda, in Benishangul-Gumuz Region, has come under near full control of an armed group as of April 19, 2021. The area is home to 25 thousand people.
- Residents who have fled the area told EHRC that the armed group has burned down and looted public and private property. Local police have fled the area.
- There are also reports that civilians have been killed and public servants have been kidnapped. According to residents and officials the EHRC spoke to, a small contingent of the regional security force in the vicinity is outnumbered and additional forces have yet to reach the locality.
- The ECHR says that this escalation of the insecurity plaguing the region is alarming. It is continuing to monitor the situation and is in communication with local and federal authorities.
- They also call for “immediate reinforcement of the security forces in the area and in the region as a whole and a speedy intervention to prevent further loss of life and human rights violations.”
- The EHRC has expressed concern for the safety of civilians who fled the area fearing for their lives and said it was in discussion with relevant federal and local authorities.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 22 April)

- The spokesperson of Ethiopia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs says recently released captured soldiers by Sudan were Ethiopian farmers, not soldiers.
- Spokesperson Dina Mufti stated: “The fake stories flowing from the Sudanese side about capturing 61 Ethiopian soldiers is not true. The truth is that they have captured about 61 Ethiopians, of which 59 are farmers residing in the border areas, but portray them as captured soldiers which is not the case.”
- According to him, only two of them are militias and 59 farmers. As a matter of fact there is no military confrontation right now between the two countries. “There is no way that this side or the other side captures soldiers from the battlefield. Yet they are trying to portray that there is military confrontation between the two countries,” he added.

Reported International situation (as per 22 April)

- The United States state department has said that it has seen no evidence of an Eritrean withdrawal from Tigray, despite being announced almost 20 days ago.
- The US State department spokesperson is reiterating the need for Eritrea to withdraw immediately.
- The US embassy in Asmara has posted a message on facebook which said that it hoped to be able to work more closely with Eritrea in the future. However it also makes clear that Eritrean forces need to leave Tigray as these are destabilising the region.
- In a statement issued on Thursday, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) called for an upscaling of the humanitarian response in Tigray and called for unfettered access to the whole region. They stated that the ongoing conflict in Tigray is an impediment to humanitarian operations and call for a “return to normalcy.”
- The UNSC is also expressing deep concern at the allegations of human rights violations and abuses and called for an investigation into the abuses.
- UNICEF is warning that there is no “end in sight” for the conflict in Tigray.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 134 - 26 April 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 25 April)

- Fierce fighting between Tigray defense forces and ENDF allied forces has continued in the Central and Northwestern zones of the Tigray region.
- Reported that Ethiopian and Eritrean troops have burned down residential areas in Idagahamus, Tigray, and scores of civilians have been injured.
- The International Organization for Migration (IMO) says more than 1 million people were internally displaced across 178 accessible locations in Ethiopia's Tigray region and neighboring Afar and Amhara. However, the data is only applicable to accessible areas. Surveyors have been unable to access large parts of the region, especially in Central, Eastern, and Southern Tigray.
- Their data suggests that many of the refugees are fleeing to large towns and cities to "seek humanitarian assistance". The highest concentration of IDPs is in Shire where 445,309 IDPs are residing in overcrowded collective shelters, including schools, within the host community and in open spaces.
- Other urban areas with high displacement concentrations included Adwa (129,524 IDPs), Mekelle (126,267), Adigrat (100,168) and Aksum (60,115). The majority of IDPs are from Western and Northwestern Tigray.
- The IOM is also reporting that 75 sites housing IDPs have yet to receive any humanitarian aid since the conflict started.
- According to MSF, which has teams present in the region, there has been an increase in reports of violence against civilians, including extra-judicial killings and sexual violence. These incidents have been observed by MSF staff.
- MSF further reported that "clashes continued in Central, Eastern, North-Western, South Eastern, and Southern Zones." MSF also estimates that 4.5 million people are in need of assistance in Tigray.
- The Associated Press (AP) has spoken to a Mai-Cadra survivor in Hamdayet refugee camp, Abraha Kinfe, who lost his wife named Letay nine days after delivering twin baby girls. "I don't know what wrong I did to my God for these troubles," said Abraha.
- The AP report says four days after Letay delivered, her afterbirth was expelled. But she wept day and night in pain. "If I took my wife to the clinic, they might kill me," said Abraha. "It was very difficult to decide."
- Abraha told AP that on the ninth day after giving birth, Letay beckoned him closer. "Look after my babies," she said. "I am going to die. I don't have hope and I am very sorry."
- The man, of Tigrayan origin, had the ethnicity on his ID changed and feared speaking his native Tigrayan when Amhara militia came to his house multiple times.
- Hearing about new killings everyday in the city, they decided to flee a month after the conflict began, eventually reaching Sudan.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (as per 25 April)

- Opposition politician, Lidetu Ayalew remains banned from traveling abroad despite needing life-saving heart surgery.

- The Ethiopian Federal Police requested the ban due to criminal offenses, primarily his condemnation of the Tigray war.
- Endale Haile, Ethiopia's chief ombudsman, told AFP that over 250 thousand people have been displaced in Oromia and 75 thousand in the Oromo Special zone, which is part of the Amhara region.
- The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) has postponed voters' registration by two and three weeks in various parts of the country.
- In Afar and Somali regions where voters' registration has been delayed, the registration deadline has as a result been extended by three weeks.
- The board said that voters' registrations did not start in all the four zones of Wellega in western Oromia, due to problems associated with security.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 25 April)

- Gunfire erupted in Somalia's capital on Sunday between soldiers loyal to the government and others angry at the country's leader as tensions spiked over President Farmajo's extended stay in power.
- Sudan Tribune (ST) said Sudan will sue Ethiopia before the international courts if Ethiopia unilaterally carries out a second filling without concluding a legally binding agreement on the GERD.
- Yasir Abbas, Sudan's Minister of Irrigation said his government is considering various options to protect the country from the risks of the dam and its socio-environment impact on the downstream countries.
- He further stressed that Sudan will file lawsuits against the Italian contracting company and the Ethiopian government.

Reported International situation (as per 25 April)

- The EU has pulled more than €100 million (\$120 million) in funding away from Eritrea, citing Tigray conflict and lack of interest.
- The funding had been allocated in part for the construction of new roads in the country. When this was announced in 2018, it raised many concerns, as it was feared that conscripted National service members would be used as labour force. The UN has called the National service slave labour.
- In a letter to the European Parliaments Development Committee, Urpilainen, the Commissioner for international partnerships proposed that the money goes to other areas in the Horn of Africa, including 80 million to Sudan, 20 million to South Sudan, and 20 million to refugees in the region.
- The Commissioner also wrote that implementation in Eritrea had been highly challenging and that the current situation reflected "lack of interest expressed by the Government of Eritrea" on EUTF-funded projects and development cooperation with the EU.
- UNHCR Ethiopia said face-to-face activities in the Refugee Reception Centre in Addis Ababa has been temporarily suspended due to Covid-19.
- UNHCR also said they have established telephone helplines and online platforms to ensure that refugees can get in touch and access protection services.
- But, this will negatively affect those living in inaccessible areas due to telecom and internet blackout.
- Ethiopia's finance ministry signed a \$907 million financing agreement with the World Bank geared towards improving access to financing, the fight against COVID-19, and electricity investment. Some \$700 million was a loan and \$207 million a grant.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 135 - 27 April 2021

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Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 26 April)

- Dimtsi Weyane (DW) International said Tigray defense forces have entered the Amhara region and completely destroyed Amhara Special forces who were stationed around Miraq, Abergele Woreda.
- In the fight, many ammunition and weapons were also seized by the Tigray defense forces.
- Over 300 Ethiopian soldiers who were called in for help tried to enter the area but were also killed.
- Dede-bit Media said an Eritrean commander including soldiers has surrendered to Tigray defense forces following the call of Dr. Debre-sion Gebremicheal.
- Reported that house to house search was carried out by Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers in Mekelle city following the disappearance of an Eritrean military officer.
- Dimtsi Weyane (DW) International reported that there was intense fighting between ENDF allied forces and Tigray forces in Tsediya an area between Edaga Arbi and Nebelet, Central Tigray as well as Enda-Medhanialem and Agbe on April 23-24, 2021.
- It was reported that, on these battlefields, Tigray defense forces inflicted significant damage on both Eritrean troops and ENDF forces.
- Founder and chairperson of a local aid organization, Genet Birhanu was arrested in Mekelle after she travelled from Addis Ababa to deliver humanitarian assistance.
- Reports indicate that ethnic profiling and mass arrest of Tigrayans in Addis Ababa is intensifying.
- Tigrayans travelling from the Tigray region to Addis Ababa are detained in Addis Ababa indefinitely without any charge.
- Reports are also indicating Tigrayans repatriated from different places like Yemen and Saudi Arabia are also being detained right after their arrival at Bole international airport. Just from prison to prison.
- Road blockage and telecom blackouts in central, Northwestern, and western Tigray are still not lifted.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (as per 26 April)

- Reported that the head of the Amhara Regional state Police Commission, Commissioner Abere Adamu has been fired from his post.
- Addis Standard said dozens of injured ethnic Oromo residents of North Shewa and Oromo Special Zone of Amhara regional state have arrived at Adama city, Oromia regional state to get medical treatment amid security concerns.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 26 April)

- Africa Confidential said Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy and Eritrea's President Isaias are preparing an agreement under which Eritrean and Ethiopian troops can cooperate in each other's countries.
- Daily News Egypt says Egypt and Sudan have renewed their aim to hold a new round of negotiations on GERD, following the failure of the last round of talks in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- The tension between Addis Ababa on one side, and Cairo and Khartoum on the other, has reached a critical level, with Ethiopia announcing the date for the second filling of the dam.
- This comes in a move that Sudan considers an imminent threat, and Egypt fears would have a negative impact on its share of River Nile waters.

- The dispute, which involves Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia, has been impervious to regional and international mediations and is currently in an impasse.
- Dimtsi Weyane (DW) International said Eritrea has sent troops to Somalia after gunfire has erupted in the capital Mogadishu.
- Reported that more than 80% of the capital, Mogadishu is under the control of opposition forces.

Reported International situation (as per 26 April)

- Sec. Antony J. Blinken spoke with Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy to reiterate the United States' grave concern about the deteriorating humanitarian and human rights crisis in the country, including the growing risk of famine in Tigray as well as ongoing insecurity in other parts of the country.
- The Secretary pressed for Ethiopia's and Eritrea's commitments to withdraw Eritrean troops from Tigray to be implemented immediately, in full, and in a verifiable manner.
- In addition, the Secretary noted that Eritrean forces and Amhara regional forces in Tigray are contributing to the growing humanitarian disaster and committing human rights abuses and stressed the need for all parties to the conflict to end hostilities immediately.
- The Secretary noted his appointment of a Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa and noted that Ambassador Feltman would travel to Ethiopia in the coming days.
- Sec. Antony J. Blinken announced on Friday that Jeffrey Feltman was appointed as a New US envoy for the Horn of Africa as Washington looks to step up diplomatic efforts in a region hit by the conflict in Tigray and other crises.
- Blinken said the appointment underscores the Administration's commitment to lead an international diplomatic effort to address the interlinked political, security, and humanitarian crises in the Horn of Africa.
- "Feltman also will lead international efforts to address tensions between Ethiopia and Sudan and around the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam," Blinken said in a statement.
- In response to a parliamentary question, the German Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development said Germany and the EU does not want to end bilateral cooperation at this time. Ethiopia is an important regional partner and it does not make sense to end it. However clear conditions have also been put forward, namely the unfettered access for humanitarian aid organisations and an independent UN investigation to "clarify the circumstances and realities".
- The UK government said Eritrea's role in the Tigray conflict is particularly concerning; there are numerous reports of atrocities involving Eritrean forces, and their presence is fuelling insecurity.
- It has called for Eritrean forces to leave Ethiopia immediately, in line with the commitment made by Prime Minister Abiy in his announcement on 26 March of their withdrawal.
- "We are clear that their withdrawal must be swift, unconditional, and verifiable. We have yet to see any evidence that Eritrean forces are leaving Tigray," said Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon.
- Lord Ahmad also said the humanitarian situation in Tigray is dire, basic services have collapsed and the humanitarian response is hampered by poor security and access.
- "There are credible reports of atrocities committed by all parties to the conflict, including harrowing reports of mass killings and rape. We will hold Prime Minister Abiy to his statement on 23 March that the perpetrators of human rights atrocities should face justice whoever they are," added Lord Ahmad.

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Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 27 April)

- France 24 says Eritrean soldiers are blocking and looting food aid in Tigray, according to government documents obtained, stoking fears of starvation deaths as fighting nears the six-month mark.
- The reports said concerns of impending humanitarian disaster and the role of Eritrean troops in exacerbating the situation have been echoed in multiple presentations given to aid groups by the Emergency Coordination Centre of Tigray's interim government.
- "The most recent presentation, on 23 April 2021, says Eritrean soldiers had forced aid workers providing food relief out of multiple parts of Tigray, including the areas of Samre and Gijet south of the regional capital Mekele," added the report.
- In the presentation it says: "Eritrean soldiers have also started showing up at food distribution points in Tigray, looting the supplies after our beneficiaries became frightened and (ran) away."
- An official who attended the April 23 2021 presentation spoke to AFP and said aid workers were visibly frustrated over their inability to access parts of the region.
- "Some of the NGO workers were crying because of the systemic denial. Some of them were screaming, crying," said the official, adding that government officials coordinating relief efforts were also fed up.
- The report says Eritrean Information Minister Yemane Gebremeskel denied the allegations. "No way that Eritrea can block humanitarian assistance or loot them," he told AFP in an email.
- General Yohannes Gebremeskel, head of a command post in Tigray, told AFP that: "In the last two weeks we had access problems to pass some of the checkpoints, especially controlled by Eritreans."
- General Yohannes referenced a critical checkpoint between Adigrat and Axum as an example.
- "We have sent our staff to talk to the Eritrean commanders who are commanding those troops at the checkpoint. We are waiting to hear the reply," said General Yohannes.
- Mulu Nega, head of Tigray's interim government, told AFP that people are complaining about the road and food distribution and said his officials were investigating.
- Abadi Girmay, Head of the Tigray Interim Bureau of Agriculture and Development, says there would be unprecedented danger in the next 3 to 4 years if the agricultural sector does not recover.
- He said if life is to continue in Tigray, at bare minimum, what we lost last year must be compensated this year and the agriculture sector must be restored to normal and we should get harvest subsequently.
- The Bureau Head stressed that the agriculture sector and farmers were most devastated. "If we can not get a harvest this year, by the next 3 to five years we could face a very serious problem. And it may induce famine, it could be the worst history in the country," he added.
- Abadi also warned that Tigray faced a threat that would result in displacement, induced famine, starvation, and subsequent death if the people of Tigray and Ethiopia at large, including aid providers, do not contribute to the rehabilitation of the agriculture sector in Tigray.
- "From our studies, to establish woredas structures we need at least 200 million ETB, but to restore back structure in the whole of Tigray's we need at least 120 billion ETB. We know that cannot be realized now, it's a dream now. Maybe within 5 to 10 years with the appropriate help," he said.

- He also added: "We have managed to raise funds that could be enough to purchase 120,000 quintals from different partners, however, Tigray needs at least 600,000 quintals of seed that amounts to around 24 billion ETB." He added in the coming 3 to 4 years there will be a serious situation where starvation could claim the lives of many.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (as per 27 April)

- Addis Standard said students who took the entrance exam to Ethiopian universities in the year 2020/2021 are opting to enroll in private universities due to security concerns.
- Solomon, who is a resident of Addis Ababa and one of the students who took the university entrance exam told Addis Standard that: "I scored 471 in the entrance exam. I didn't apply or select my preferred university to be placed in as requested by the Ministry of Science and Higher education. If my placement was going to be outside Addis Ababa, I wouldn't have gone anyways."
- He continued: "That's why I enrolled in one of the private university colleges by paying all registration fees plus the first-semester fee which is around 4,500 ETB," while explaining that the reason he took such a measure was 'feeling unsafe outside Addis Ababa' due to the deteriorating security situation in the country and fear of violence following the upcoming general election.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 27 April)

- Social media sources indicate Somalia's president Mohamed Abdullahi Farmaajo will step down shortly.
- Reuters says residents of Somalia's capital Mogadishu fled neighborhoods on Tuesday fearing renewed clashes between rival factions in the security forces, who have split in a dispute over an extension to the president's term.
- Government forces also raided an independent radio station and confiscated equipment.
- Forces loyal to the opposition hold parts of the city and the two sides clashed over the weekend, raising fears that al-Qaeda-linked al-Shabaab insurgents could exploit a security vacuum as state forces turn on each other.
- "This morning, we were surprised to see more well-armed pro-opposition troops have settled in this area of Siigaale, they told us to move," said Abdullahi Mohamed, a local elder.
- Maryam Al-Mahdi, Sudan's Minister of Foreign Affairs, is visiting a number of African countries to explain Sudan's position on the process of filling and operating the GERD.
- The minister will meet the leaders of the 4 countries (The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda) to brief them about the Sudanese position on how to resolve the existing dispute over the giant dam.

Reported International situation (as per 27 April)

- In his first interview, U.S envoy to the Horn of Africa, Jeffrey Feltman said the conflict in Tigray has the potential to spiral into a full-fledged regional crisis, citing a comparison to the war in Syria.
- "Look at what the collapse of Syria and the chaos of civil war has meant," said Feltman, citing the refugee crisis and its impact on Europe, as well as the rise of terrorist groups in the power vacuum from the collapse of the country.
- He also said: "Ethiopia has 110 million people. "If the tensions in Ethiopia would result in a widespread civil conflict that goes beyond Tigray, Syria will look like child's play by comparison."
- "In terms of an immediate focus, without question, there has to be attention paid to Tigray," he said. and other leading priorities were the Ethiopia-Sudan border dispute and the tensions over the GERD.

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Fighting in Tigray (as per 27 April)

- TMH reported that more than 2000 Eritrean troops has been destroyed by Tigray defense forces near Endabatsahma Woreda, Central Tigray.
- Eritrean soldiers have also been recently spotted in Samre, South of Mekelle. That is 200 kilometers away from the Eritrean - Ethiopian border.
- In a document leaked from an Ethiopian opposition party, revealed that the Ethiopian Citizens for Social Justice (EZEMA) opposed the withdrawal of Eritrean troops from the Tigray region.
- The document says EZEMA wants Eritrean troops to stay in the fight in Tigray region because ENDF is currently incapable on its own and would lose if Eritrea withdraws.
- According to the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, unidentified gunmen attacked truck drivers going from Addis Ababa to Gojam in the North Shewa Zone of the Oromia Regional State. This area is administered by Amhara. Reportedly five drivers were injured in the incident.

Situation in Tigray (as per 27 April)

- Andemariam Yohans, Seb-Hidri Civil Society Tigray's Secretary, and Ass. Prof. in Mekelle University, who was detained by security officers in Mekelle four days back, is still in custody in Kedamay Weyane police station.
- In addition to him, hundreds of men and women remain detained in the Kedamay Weyane police station, with no known reason and no charges presented.
- Hundreds of farmers have been brought from distant villages in Adwa and Axum to the city of Mekelle, and they don't know why they were brought.
- The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) says many health care facilities in the Tigray region have either been looted or destroyed and this is affecting those with experience of sexual violence as they have no access to healthcare.
- Ethiopia National Defence Force uniformed Eritrean soldiers abducted Tigrayan male and female youth from different places of Tigray.
- OCHA has said in a new report that "While humanitarian access has improved, the situation in Tigray remains volatile and is hampering partners' efforts to deliver timely humanitarian assistance."
- As of 19 April, 245,586 people or 9% of the targeted population were reached. "With completed, ongoing, and planned distributions, the cluster could reach 672,401 people (24 percent of target)"
- Getachew Reda, Executive committee member of TPLF appeared on TMH TV and addressed many issues regarding the ongoing fighting.
- He said that the Eritrean Defence Force is not withdrawing from Tigray. He further asserted that they will not leave unless they are forced to.
- He also reiterated his previous claim that the TDF is increasing in strength and has the capacity to strike anywhere and at any time.

- Lastly he called the international community to continue to pressure with actions.

Reported Situation in Eritrea (as per 27 April)

- There have also been several reports of new smuggling and human trafficking routes emerging in Eritrea. Reportedly there has been an increase in demand from Eritrean soldiers trying to leave the country.
- This follows other reports that young, underage Eritreans are being rounded up and being sent to military training camps.
- Radio Erena reported that hundreds of prisoners who are serving terms between 6 months to 5 years imprisonment for misdemeanors were taken from different prisons in Eritrea to Wia camp south of Massawa for military training,

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 27 April)

- TMH said over 100 ethnic Tigrayan members of the Ethiopian peacekeeping mission in Darfur, Sudan, have refused to return back to Ethiopia due to fear of ethnic profiling and mass arrest in Ethiopia.
- The WHO has said that Sudan has launched a vaccination campaign to vaccinate the 77 thousand refugees in Sudanese camps. The region is at a high risk of yellow fever epidemics due to climate and ecological factors. There are also areas where the immunity against the disease is low.
- The Somali President, Farmaajo, has agreed not to extend his presidential term. There have been tensions in Somalia after the elections were delayed. Opposition forces took control of large parts of the capital. It is still unclear whether he will step down
- The Egyptian Prime Minister told local media that Egypt would not give up “a single drop” of its share of the Nile water.
- The Ethiopians have themselves called water sharing treaties dating back 1959 and 1929 as unacceptable.

Reported International situation (as per 27 April)

- The UN unders Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs has reiterated that rape is being used as a weapon of war. he said that six months after the conflict started, the rapes had not stopped.
- Speaking to the UNSC, he also said that “They are deliberately and systematically organized, targeted, ethnically based, and they are intended to terrorize, humiliate and brutalize.”
- He is urging for the international community to step in and hold the perpetrators accountable. Political dialogue, but also if necessary sanctions, need to be leveraged to “to ensure respect for the law and the protection of civilians and the objects they depend on to survive”.
- In the same briefing, the President of the ICRC has also said that it is critical “for the Council to show leadership, so that the suffering of the women, men and children who have already lived through the horrors of wars is not compounded”.
- US officials have also said that the US is continuing to pressure Ethiopia to end the conflict and Eritrean soldiers have to leave the region.
- In a phone call with PM Abiy on Monday, Sec State Blinken told Abiy that Eritrea needed to withdraw its troops in a “full, and in a verifiable manner”.

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Eritrean presence in Tigray (as per 28 April)

- USAID says that it has received credible reports that Eritrean soldiers are wearing Ethiopian army uniforms. They also say that the Eritrean presence in Tigray “remains unchanged”.

Fighting in Ethiopia (as per 28 April)

- According to local authorities in Amhara, Tigrayan defence forces launched an attack in the Wag Hemra zone, which borders Tigray.
- Tigrayans say that the attack was aimed at Amhara Special Forces and was successful. However, according to local authorities, Amhara Special Forces were able to repel the attack.

Situation in Ethiopia (as per 28 April)

- AP has published a story on how thousands of ethnic Tigrayans have been detained by Ethiopian authorities outside of Tigray, accusing them of treason and holding them for months without charges.
- This story comes after months of reports of ethnic profiling and harassment of Tigrayans in the country.
- One person AP spoke to on a smuggled phone, said that he is being detained with 400 other Tigrayans, and that they have not had access to any lawyers. Family members are not allowed to visit either.
- The repression is especially severe on military personnel. According to an estimate the AP received, 17 thousand Tigrayans were in the Ethiopian military when the conflict began. They have been detained.
- However it is not only the military. Some are soldiers who are currently working as teachers and nurses, others lawyers and airline employees. Dozens of priests and deacons were also detained for a month.
- The detentions of Tigrayans is happening across the country. Another person the AP spoke to said that 1500 are being detained in Mirab Abaya, South Ethiopia.
- The people are being held in cramped quarters, and are only receiving one meal a day.
- A leaked video which AP saw and verified, showed a senior military official saying: “We had to clean out our insides. ... Even if there may be good people among them, we can’t differentiate the good from the bad. To save the country, we made it so they were excluded from doing work.”
- The hundred Ethiopian peacekeepers of Tigray origin deployed in Darfur, who refused to return to Ethiopia, have requested asylum in Sudan.
- A court has dismissed the travel ban put on opposition politician Lidetu Ayalew by Federal and Oromia police. Lidetu is looking to travel abroad to seek medical treatment.
- He was acquitted of charges of attempting to “forcefully dismantle the constitutional order” in March, but police insisted that he was still under investigation and posed a flight risk if he was allowed to travel abroad.
- The OFC, OLF, and the armed group OLA, released statements calling for an Ethiopian national dialogue
- The OFC said that there was an economic crisis, high inflation due to the previous TPLF dominated government, and that the current conflict in Tigray was “consuming the already meagre national economic resources, while millions of people are left to starve and scavenge”.

- They also said that there was a need for an “inclusive dialogue” before the “forced elections”. These sentiments were echoed by the OLF and OLA.
- The OLA called for the postponement of the election, cessation of hostilities and constitutional reform.
- The OLA is an armed group which has been fighting the Ethiopian central government for decades.
- They suggest revamping the “judiciary and electoral system, national defence force and limiting inter-state conflict by way of clarifying the mandates of regional special forces”.
- The OLF called on the AU, EU, and UNSC, and UNHCR to intervene in the ongoing crisis as the country is “reaching a stage of high unpredictability with widespread anarchy”.
- They also said that the human rights violations in Tigray and Benishangul Gumuz region are simply “the tip of the iceberg.”

Situation in Tigray (as per 28 April)

- Aid the Church in Need, a British based organisation, reported that a priest they have spoken to reported that there is “there is rampant hunger and fear”. He also said that the situation is only getting worse and did not have “the words to describe their suffering”.
- He further stated that “there are no official public services, not enough food, no medication, no security and trust.”
- The priest reported that a lot of violence was also perpetrated against priests and sisters. Many have been threatened or killed. The priest said that church property had been “completely cleaned out by the soldiers”.
- USAID says that they have reached 1.5 million people in Tigray through JEOP (Joint Emergency Operations Program).
- USAID and its partners are also supporting 50 integrated Mobile Health and Nutrition Teams (MHNTs) across the region to provide critical health care services.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 28 April)

- The UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia has said in a letter that he is concerned about mass displacement in Mogadishu. According to him between 60 and a 100 thousand people have been displaced in the city after violence started last week.
- This adds to an already large displacement. He estimates that since January 173 thousand people have been displaced, 2/3rds because of violence. Somalia is also experiencing a drought.
- Seven people were also killed in Mogadishu following a suicide bombing in front of the police headquarters. Two soldiers and three “passers by” were among the dead.

Reported International situation (as per 28 April)

- Sudan has said that it is suspending an agreement with Russia to establish a Russian naval base in the country.
- The British Embassy in Ethiopia has corrected Ethiopian Media after several newspapers, including FANA, wrongly reported that the British ambassador had said that the current operations in Tigray were important for peace.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 139 - 03 May 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 02 May)

- Dimtsi Weyane (DW) International reported that more than 2,500 Ethiopian and Eritrean troops were killed and wounded by Tigray defense forces on 28-29 April 2021.
- On 28 April 2021, Tigray defense forces ambushed Eritrean troops in Rahya, Adwa Woreda, and killed over 313 Eritrean soldiers and 488 soldiers were wounded.
- On 29 April 2021, Tigray defense forces took an offensive against ENDF soldiers in Werkamba near Tembien. As a result, over 420 ENDF soldiers were killed and 621 wounded. In this battle, Ethiopia's 31st Division's of 1st, 2nd, and 4th Brigades were participating. A 107mm rocket and ZU-23 were destroyed and various ammunition was also captured.
- In another incident, on 29-30 April 2021, Tigray defense forces successfully repelled an ENDF's offensive in Suluh near Hawzien, Eastern Tigray. In the battle, 290 ENDF soldiers including deputy brigade commander Major Engida were killed, over 385 wounded, and 3 soldiers were captured along with various weapons and ammunition.
- Reportedly Eritrean forces have killed 20 civilians, most of them farmers, in Edaga Hibret, Asgede Woreda on 29 April 2021. They denied normal burial service and left them in the streets.
- Eritrean forces and ENDF soldiers carried out a civilian massacre including deacons, priests, and visually impaired in the district of Tanqua Abergele, Yechilay, in a village called Jijiqe on 27 April 2021. All the civilian victims were killed inside their homes.
- ENDF forces have continued house to house searching in the Shire city around the 70 Kare area and taking valuable assets of civilians including the jewelry of Tigrayan women.
- Adigrat to Adwa road accessible to car owners who possess a permission paper from the Eritrean military command around Adigrat town, Eastern Tigray.
- CNN reported that the USAID is warning the Tigray region could face famine if aid organizations are not granted unfettered access to the millions in urgent need of assistance.
- Emily Dakin, a top official of USAID told CNN that it is estimated that "somewhere between 950,000 to 1.25 million people are inaccessible to humanitarians."
- Dakin said that the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team she leads has been able to travel to parts of Tigray, particularly around the regional capital of Mekelle, and has seen a significant amount of humanitarian need.
- "There's a pretty critical tipping point where famine is possible and could occur in parts of Tigray without the immediate cessation of hostilities and a rapid increase in humanitarian access and scale-up of life-saving humanitarian assistance," she said.
- The head of the Tigray defense forces, General Abraha Tesfay (Abraha Dinkul) appeared on TMH TV, a network in Australia. This surprised many as ENDF chief of staff General Birhanu Julahad declared a month ago that General Abraha had been killed and buried in a church in the Southern Tigray.
- An Ethiopian soldier of Tigrayan origin working as a UN Peacekeeper, Selamawit Gebremichael Tafere, has been imprisoned by the Ethiopians at the Al-Fashar UNAMID camp, Darfur on 02 May 2021. Selamawit is one of the peacekeepers who decided not to return to Ethiopia because of the ongoing war and asked Sudan for asylum.

- The Council of Ministers of Ethiopia recommended a proposal to designate TPLF and Shene as terrorist organizations. The decision of the council of ministers creates anger among the Tigrayan and Oromo communities living in Ethiopia and abroad.

Situation in Ethiopia (as per 02 May)

- At least 21 civilians were killed in two separate attacks in Bure, Amhara. Fifteen passengers were killed by gunmen in a bus traveling from Bure to Nekemte city in Oromia.
- Similarly, six civilians were killed, some being burned alive, in Danchu Kebelle in SNNPRS.
- Both incidents took place on 30 April 2021, a Good Friday holiday for Ethiopian Christians.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 02 May)

- Sudan has implied it could in the future take control of a controversial Nile dam built by Ethiopia as the two countries continue to trade threats and criticism over the issue. It claims to be able to do so by withdrawing from a 1902 agreement transferring territory to Ethiopia.
- The Sudanese foreign ministry said Khartoum could reconsider Addis Ababa's sovereignty over the Benshangul-Gumuz region where the GERD was built.
- "If Ethiopia continues to reject Sudan and Egypt's reference to the agreements during negotiations over the dam, Addis Ababa will compromise its sovereignty over the region," said the ministry.
- Sudanese foreign ministry said this week that: "The Ethiopian claim that the relevant agreements are an insignificant colonial legacy is an explicit fallacy of historical facts, indicating that Ethiopia was an independent, sovereign state and a member of the international community at the time of the conclusion of those agreements."
- "Such selective disavowal of international agreements for propaganda and domestic political reasons is a harmful and costly approach that does not help to reach a negotiated agreement acceptable to all parties," added the ministry.

Reported International situation (as per 02 May)

- U.S. Senators Christopher Coons and Chris Van Hollen will visit Sudan on Monday for talks on the on border dispute with Ethiopia.
- US senators Booker, Cardin, Kaine, Rosen, and Markey wrote a letter to the newly appointed US envoy to the Horn. In the letter, they urge the Envoy to not only try and resolve the conflict but also to "advocate for peace and reconciliation" in Ethiopia. They further urge him to look at the various crises as a whole and take a "holistic" approach that reflects the complexity of the crisis.
- They also wrote that many trends in Ethiopia, including the conflict in Tigray, ethnic violence in Oromia, Amhara, and other parts of Tigray, and the vast amounts of people displaced in the country, are destabilizing the country. Other crises, such as the GERD dam negotiations and border disputes, further complicate the situation.
- They also mentioned that the planned election due to take place on June 5th does not currently comply with international standards of "freedom, fairness, and transparency".
- The senators worry that if the elections take place without necessary reform, there will be growing mistrust, ethnic violence, and political tension across the country.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 140 - 04 May 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 03 May)

- Tigray Media House reported that Eritrean have been involved in interrogations and torture of Tigrayan prisoners. In some instances, they were also involved in federal police investigations in Addis Ababa.
- According to a source, civilians were taken by Eritrean soldiers while 19 others were shot.
- The former Commissioner of the Tigray Electoral Board, Muluwork Kidanemariam was speaking on TMH from the countryside. He announced that Tigray defense forces are advancing strongly and that the liberation of Tigray is not far any more.
- Sources indicate, in the last weeks, there were a lot of aid blockages by the Eritrean forces, not letting even doctors to evacuate wounded people including children and the situation is aggravating.
- Oxfam is warning that over 5 million face “extreme hunger” in Tigray.
- The conflict combined with locusts has left many farmers with nothing to plant. Experts are saying that if it does not happen now, it will not be possible to do so again until 18 months from now.

Gender Based Violence (GBV) in Tigray (as per 03 May)

- In a new report, the International Rescue Committee finds that “lack of access to food and sources of cash” is creating a situation where women are forced to exchange sex for an average of \$1,25. They also say that there is little reporting on these “exploitative relationships” between host communities and female IDPs.
- The conflict has also led to a spike in Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) perpetrated by husbands and partners. There are also fewer social sanctions on men to prevent gender based violence from happening and hold perpetrators accountable.
- Simultaneously women fear being cast out of the community if they speak out if they talk about violence. GBV has been deprioritised in favour of other needs such as food and shelter.
- Sexual violence was not only prevalent during the first months of the conflict, but continues to be.
- The healthcare services are severely limited. The IRC also finds that for some healthcare workers, gender based violence is not an issue. Hospitals also often do not have the facilities to treat women properly. Only one hospital provided medicine to treat HIV after exposure.
- They also found that “Lack of women’s health was a consistent theme and there is evidence that pregnant women died on the way to safety and that unattended births are taking place in camps.”

Situation in Ethiopia (as per 03 May)

- Oromia Media Network (OMN) said heavy gunshots were heard at the residence of the leader of OLF, Dawud Ibssa and his house is under siege in Addis Ababa.
- The House of People’s Representatives (HPR) Ethiopia has called on TPLF and Shene to bring any evidence they have against their designation by the Council of Ministers as terrorist organizations, and to submit the evidence to the House in person within the next 48 hrs.
- The committee for the protection of Journalists published the annual survey on Journalist arrests in the world. In Ethiopia the number of journalists arrested was 7 compared to one a year earlier.
- The Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) said the Ethiopian Council of Ministers’ anti- terrorism law proposal issued to categorize the TPLF and Shene as terrorist organizations is a deliberate move to armed entities in the political dialogue and to sabotage political dialogue.

- “Although we do not understand how the word Shene is used in the proposed bill, we guess they would mean Shane as they associate this word to any citizen of Oromia that does not support the Prosperity Party,” said OLF in a statement.
- The OLF added the word Shane is a sacred word in the Gada System and its administrative and cultural structures defining a wide concept of Oromo culture and traditions. Using this name for this evil purpose in anti-terrorism bill is an abuse of the word and degrading the Oromo language and culture.
- “Whatever word is used this proposal is intentionally designed to obstruct the peaceful resolution to the political crises in the country. Particularly, at this critical time, when internal forces and international bodies such as the US and EU are trying the peaceful resolution of multi-layer security and political crises that are devastating the country, it is an evil act to introduce such damaging law to enhance conflict,” added OLF.
- Further the OLF said the Ethiopian ruling group is governing the country illegally as its tenure ended on October 05, 2020. Both the Council of Ministers, the Parliament and the whole government officials have lost their mandate to rule the country.
- “Since Ethiopia is already in constitutional crises, this anti-terrorism law, even if approved by the parliament, is illegal as the Parliament itself is illegal to approve laws or to conduct national election,” said the OLF statement.
- The OLF also said: “We would like to inform the Ethiopian people and the international community that this anti-terrorism bill is particularly targeting the Oromia citizens, Benishangul-Gumuz, the Southern Nations and Peoples and the Tigrayan people who are struggling for freedom and democracy.”
- The CJP has published a story on the difficulties of reporting in Ethiopia and Tigray. The internet is routinely cut and this makes it very difficult for journalists to contact people or send pictures and videos.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 03 May)

- Ethiopia has told the United Nations that Egypt and Sudan have signed a military agreement beyond the threat of war.
- In a letter signed by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen and sent to the UN Security Council a week ago, says Egypt and Sudan are trying to put pressure on Ethiopia by taking the issue of GERD to international diplomatic forums, disrupting negotiations led by the African Union.
- Ethiopia’s Civil Service University Professor Endale Nigusse stated that a successful filling of the 18 billion cubic meter water in the GERD reservoir in the coming rainy season would change the course of the dam’s talks and enforce Egypt to lose its long standing hegemony.
- “The second filling of the GERD reservoir would also shift the responsibility of protecting the project to Egypt for the sake of its own safety,” he said.
- Sudanese Foreign Minister Mariam Al-Sadi Al-Mahdi said the second filling of the GERD would impact the lives of millions of people in Sudan.
- In a meeting with Congolese president and current chairman of the African Union Felix Tshisekedi, the Sudanese foreign minister stressed the importance of reaching a legally binding agreement between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia over the filling and operation of the GERD before the start of the second filling in June.

Reported International situation (as per 03 May)

- China is taking over the Presidency of the UNSC. The first meeting will be held on Tuesday.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 141 - 05 May 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Children victim of Situation in Tigray (as per 04 May)

- Save the Children says almost 5,000 children are currently separated from their parents as the result of the conflict in Tigray, Ethiopia, with many living in unsafe and dire conditions in informal camps.
- "Six months on since the fighting started, at least 917 unaccompanied and 4,056 separated children have been recorded by the UN. Many of them have no adult caregivers and are at risk of neglect and sexual and physical abuse," said Save the Children.
- Save the Children said many of the children were separated from their parents while fleeing for their lives during the conflict. Others have lost their parents to violence.
- Save the Children added: "We are gravely concerned for the mental and physical wellbeing of these children. Separated children face enormous challenges in meeting their basic needs, missing the people in their lives who would usually help them find food, water and shelter."
- Some of these children are currently not in safe care and many are living in a single room where over 50 people sleep, exposing them to further risks of harm including physical and sexual violence.
- "In the past two months, more than 950 girls and women have reported they have been raped. But, in reality, this figure is likely to be much higher. Women who have spoken with Save the Children's Emergency Health Unit say that many survivors are too scared to report the sexual assault or to seek treatment, due to stigma and fear of reprisal," added Save the Children.
- Save the Children's Country Director in Ethiopia, Ekin Ogutogullari, said: "The situation in Tigray is critical. Six months since the start of this conflict, hundreds of thousands of people have still not received assistance. The humanitarian response is underfunded, and the international community must continue to step up to ensure the funding matches the scale of this crisis."
- Further, Magdalena Rossman, Save the Children's Child Protection Advisor for the Tigray Response, said: "A family that is split apart through conflict suffers hugely, both psychologically and physically. Children who are separated from their parents often tell us they are afraid and are unable or unwilling to engage in simple activities that used to give them pleasure."
- Amnesty International (AI) said African and other world leaders must urgently speak out and do more to stem the ferocious tide of human rights and international humanitarian law violations in the armed conflict that has now raged for six months in the Tigray region.
- "Six months since the start of the conflict in Tigray, there is no lack of credible evidence of human rights and international humanitarian law violations, but the response from the African Union and United Nations has been woefully insufficient," said Deprose Muchena, AI's Regional Director for East and Southern Africa.
- Deprose Muchena said: "It is unconscionable that women and girls in Tigray are facing sexual violence while the world looks on. Meanwhile, hospitals and humanitarian providers have had supplies decimated in the conflict and are ill-equipped to assist."
- "It is imperative that international, independent investigations are carried out into the allegations of serious violations by all sides, with those responsible held to account, to send a clear message that there will be zero impunity," added Deprose Muchena.

- Deprose Muchena concludes: "If the international community's tepid response to the conflict in Tigray continues, there is a real threat that the already dire situation could spiral completely out of control."

Situation in Ethiopia (as per 04 May)

- Former Amhara region Police Commissioner, Abere Adamu, has died. The circumstances of his death are unclear. Commissioner Abere was replaced by Commissioner Tekola Ayfokiru last week after recent violence in South-Wello, North-Shewa and Oromo Special zones of the Amhara region.
- Ethiopia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement that Ethiopia has learnt with disappointment the EU's decision to cancel its planned election observation mission to Ethiopia.
- The Ministry further said: "It is very unfortunate to have learnt that the issue of communications equipment was put forth as a deal-breaker for the EU to observe one of the most hoped-for democratic elections in the country's history, adding that the demand has come as a surprise to the government of Ethiopia, as none of these elements were a bone of contention in past elections."
- "At a time when the telecommunication infrastructure in Ethiopia has made huge strides employing the latest available technologies, questioning the effectiveness and efficiency of its services is not a convincing reason to take the hasty decision of cancelling the mission's deployment," said the ministry.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 04 May)

- Eritrea's president, Isaias Afewerki, arrived in Khartoum for talks with Sudanese officials amid tensions over a longtime border dispute between Sudan and Ethiopia.
- The Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs rejected Sudan's claim of the Benshangul-Gumuz region and accused Sudan of running an unwarranted, provocative and increasingly bellicose propaganda campaign.

Reported International situation (as per 04 May)

- Sec. Antony J. Blinken met with EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission Josep Borrell and discussed ways to deepen U.S-EU cooperation on shared foreign policy priorities, including Russia, Iran, China, Afghanistan, and the Horn of Africa.
- U.S. Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Jeffrey Feltman will travel to Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Sudan from 4-13 May 2021. He will hold meetings with officials from the respective governments as well as the United Nations and the African Union.
- EU high representative Josep Borrell says despite all efforts by the European Union, it was not possible to reach an agreement with Ethiopian authorities on key parameters for the deployment of an EU Electoral Observation Mission in view of the parliamentary elections on 5 June 2021. As conditions are not fulfilled, the deployment of the mission has been cancelled.
- "The integrity of an electoral observation mission is a cornerstone of the EU's support for democracy. The EU regrets the refusal of the fulfilment of standard requirements for the deployment of any Electoral Observation Mission," added Borrell.
- He said it is disappointing that the EU has not received the assurances necessary to extend to the Ethiopian people one of its most visible signs of support for their quest for democracy. The EU encourages the Ethiopian authorities to increase efforts to guarantee all Ethiopians can exercise their legitimate political and civil rights.
- EU Commissioner for Crisis Management, Janez Lenarčič said over 1 million people have been displaced in Tigray after six months of the conflict and thousands have been facing sexual and gender-based violence. "Meeting basic needs and providing protection is a priority and all civilians in Tigray must be able to access humanitarian aid," he added.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 142 - 06 May 2021

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Situation in Eritrea (as per 05 May)

- PBS Frontline has released a documentary called "[Escaping Eritrea](#)", on Eritreans trying to escape the country. They have led an investigation since 2016 and gathered 10 hours of video footage of the situation in the country. They interviewed more than 30 people.
- They interview children that say that they fled the country out of fear of the National Service saying that they could be called up already at 16 or 17 years of age.
- They showed secret footage from inside the Abi Abeyto prison, an Eritrean prison just outside Asmara, where 2000 people are held in captivity without trial. They interviewed a refugee who was held for four years. It shows hundreds of people in cramped conditions, where they can be held for years.
- They also got video footage of someone who said he was a guard at Abi Abeyto prison. He provided PBS with footage from inside the prison four years after the first video. It shows many of the same cramped conditions, which did not change after the peace agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia.
- The guard said that new prisoners, people who tried to escape the National Service or move around the country, arrived every two or three weeks. The prison population is continuously increasing and is now severely overcrowded. He says that three guards were needed to push the door closed.
- They also interviewed a refugee that said that during National Service, instead of being trained, she was forced to work on farms belonging to government officials. National Service is mandatory, and has no set end. Many spend years or decades in it. The UN has described it as Slavery. People that try to escape National Service are imprisoned and tortured. It is qualified as a Crime against Humanity.
- Many women in the National Service are forced or coerced into providing sexual favours in return for basic necessities such as pads, food, or water.
- They also showed footage which shows a protest in Eritrea where government forces shot at the protesters and arrested anyone they could identify that was present, including children.
- PBS aired an audio interview with a refugee, who says that Eritrean soldiers swept through Hitsats camp, and killed, beat, raped and kidnapped refugees. Many people were taken, and those that tried to escape were shot.
- PBS covered the UN investigation into the network of Eritrean prisons, where thousands are held in poor conditions, often held in metal containers or underground holes. Many people are brutally beaten up and tortured in these prisons.
- It has been five years since the UN reports were published which found that the Eritrean government commits Crimes against Humanity. Little has been done since to bring it to the International Court of Justice.
- Dedebit Media said Eritrean defense forces are digging multiple trenches near Senafe, within Eritrea.
- Eritrean troops are digging trenches around Tserona, Golgol-Hazemo, Adi-Kuala and Barentu, or fortifying existing ones, including possibly with landmines, according to an informed source.

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 05 May)

- The Associated Press (AP) says displaced Tigrayans in Mekelle are living in hunger and fear.

- Birhanu Haile, coordinator of an IDP camp with 7000 people based in a Mekelle secondary school, says that his Western Tigray house has been occupied by Amhara and two of his nephews have been killed.
- Student Wegahta Weldie recalled stepping on dead bodies in Western Tigray as her family hid in a maize field. "Many people had been killed and it was very dark," she said. "I could not tell whether they were my relatives or not."
- A Catholic nun with the Daughters of Charity who regularly visits camps for the displaced Tigrayans said she was saddened by the sight of people who once owned "rich" land but are now destitute.
- "Well-wishers in Mekele are contributing, but for how long will they manage?" asked the nun, who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation from authorities. "Today they have food because it's been (Orthodox) Easter. The reality is another thing."
- Dedebit Media is stating that ethnic Oromo members are joining the Tigray defense forces.
- Abraham Belay has been appointed as chief executive administrator of Tigray Interim Administration replacing Mulu Nega.
- USAID is saying that the situation in Tigray is reaching a point where delays cannot be afforded to provide Humanitarian assistance to those in need in Tigray. Millions of people still need access to "food, shelter, and basic necessities to survive."

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 05 May)

- During the visit of Eritrean President Afwerki to Sudan, there was agreement on strengthening the relations and enhancing joint cooperation, as the Humera triangle was on the agenda.
- Sudanese PM Hamdok said that by strengthening economic ties, they could overcome political issues.
- Egypt's President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi met with the US Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Jeffrey Feltman, and asserted that Egypt will not accept any harm to its water interests.
- The Sudanese PM, Hamdok, told CNN that he wants a binding agreement on the GERD as otherwise "we would always be at the mercy of Ethiopia to give it today and close it tomorrow."

Reported International situation (as per 05 May)

- The G7 have released a statement saying that the "presence of foreign forces in Tigray is deeply disturbing and destabilizing" and is concerned that withdrawal of Eritrean troops has not commenced.
- The G7 said that they condemned "the killing of civilians, rape and sexual exploitation and other forms of gender-based violence, destruction and looting of religious and cultural heritage sites and the forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of Tigrayans and Eritrean refugees".
- The United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Alice Nderitu, has said that she is "alarmed by the continued escalation of ethnic violence in Ethiopia and allegations of serious violations of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights in the Tigray region."
- In a statement Nderitu said that they had received many reports of "attacks against civilians based on their religion and ethnicity as well as serious allegations of human rights violations and abuses including arbitrary arrests, killings, rape, displacement of populations".
- Nderitu also reported acts of hate speech and stigmatization including, ethnic profiling against communities, including the Tigray, Amhara, Somali, and Oromo.
- Ms. Nderitu is calling on the Ethiopian authorities to "establish national mechanisms to address the root causes of ethnic violence, build national cohesion and promote reconciliation."

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 143 - 07 May 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 06 May)

- Fierce fighting continued in recent days between Eritrean and Tigray forces near Endabatsahama and Edaga Arbi. There was also fighting between Eritrean and Tigray forces at Adigiba on May 05, 2021.
- ENDF Soldiers are looting civilian clothes and in the last three days, 113 ENDF soldiers were captured escaping Tigray wearing civilian clothes.
- Eritrean soldiers killed civilians and buried them in toilet holes in Qola Tembien, Tigray. 19 unarmed civilians were taken by Eritrean troops from Adet and their whereabouts are unknown.
- An eyewitness said Eritrean forces are digging trenches spanning from Badme to Egela borders.
- Reported that many Eritreans are crossing the Sudan border to Kassala and Hamdayt from Omhajer Eritrea, fearing possible fighting in the area after they saw new trenches being dug.
- MSF said that many people in rural areas of Tigray have yet to receive food and basic necessities. They say that while aid has reached "main cities of Tigray region, over recent months, aid is failing to reach more remote communities, where the impact of the conflict that sparked the current crisis has often been severe."
- Some areas are showing "severe acute malnutrition well above the emergency threshold". With the rainy season approaching, the situation could get worse. Crops and fields are often inaccessible due to the conflict.
- Other organisations have warned in the last week that the window to sow new crops in Tigray is closing fast, and that action needs to be taken now to avoid a long famine in the region.
- An emergency coordinator for MSF said that by the time they arrived in late 2020 the healthcare system in the region had entirely collapsed.
- An MSF team found that Adiftaw, three hours north of Axum, has been looted and "partially destroyed" and dozens of people were killed. The "water system was broken after the pumps at the boreholes had been deliberately shot at". Ten thousand people living in and around the village "have been unable either to see a doctor or be referred to a hospital for specialist care."
- Due to the high demand, the MSF team eventually had to start to triage due to lack of supplies and capacity, and only help those in most urgent need.
- MSF says that in Sebeja, as in many other Tigrayan towns, the clinic lies in ruins. Healthcare has become very difficult to provide, and there are long waiting lines when an MSF team shows up.
- MSF mobile teams carried out 300 consultations in Adiftaw and Sebeja, most of them related to sexual and reproductive health issues, malnutrition, pneumonia, and diarrhea.
- UNHCR said, as of 25th of April, "nearly 8,100 refugees from Hitsats and Shimelba had relocated to Adi Harush and Mai Aini camps ". More Eritrean refugees are approaching UNHCR in Mekelle.
- In a new report, the UNHCR says 600,000 IDPs are in Shire, 97,000 in Shiraro, and 82,000 in Mekelle.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (as per 06 May)

- The Ethiopian Parliament has approved the bill designating the TPLF and Shene as terrorist groups.
- There has been condemnation of this move as trying to suppress political opposition to the government. Some point out that both organisations do not exist anymore. The TPLF was dissolved in November by the government, while there is no organisation that legally identifies as Shene. They also mention that the timing, one month before the election, is unfortunate.

- The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) says that the amount of young unaccompanied refugee children arriving in Addis Ababa is increasing.
- According to the UNHCR, there are “1300 unaccompanied and separated children” in Addis Ababa. JRS says that without support, many end up on the streets. It is facing an uphill battle to reunite them with their families or provide them with education.
- The Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) high command said in a statement that the “illegitimate ruling party” of Ethiopia has once again quashed the prospect of peaceful resolution of the catastrophic political conflict in the country.
- It called the upcoming election a “sham” and accused the Ethiopian government of choosing “the path of war and destruction to achieve its sole objective of remaining in power at any cost.”
- Furthermore, OLA said that while violence is not its primary choice, it was forced to take this path. It says that it will hold “the “Prosperity Party” [...] solely responsible for all damage and pain that will result from the continuation of armed conflict in Oromia and Ethiopia.”
- The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has expressed serious concern at the large amounts of detentions in Oromia. They say that many of those arrested did not have a formal investigation against them, and have not been brought before a court.
- They also say that police stations have kept in detention people “whose charges were dropped by prosecutors or who were supposed to be released in accordance with a court order.”
- The EHRC is also concerned with reports that “grave violations of human rights have been committed” against the people in detention.
- EHRC said it has received “credible testimonies” and that monitoring teams have visited certain sites.
- These monitoring teams “observed detainees who had open wounds in various parts of their body and those displaying temporary or permanent physical disabilities”
- Teams also reported women among those detained in all police stations visited, as well as children being held along with adults. Some children have also been imprisoned with their mothers.
- The stations visited were also “unhygienic and overcrowded rooms which pose serious health risks. Most of the detainees face dire conditions as a result of the absence of food supply in the detention centres coupled with lack of access to water, sanitation, and medical services.”
- The EHRC also said that they had received credible “reports of arresting family members of suspects in some areas that includes arresting a father or mother to demand that they present their children.”
- Following the death of Commissioner Abere Adamu, the opposition party National Movement of Amhara has called on authorities to “immediately announce to the public the exact reason for the Commissioner’s passing.”
- The attending physician said the Commissioner died due to complications related to the heart muscle.
- The Commissioner has in the past suggested that there had been military preparations prior to the conflict starting in Tigray.

Reported International situation (as per 06 May)

- U.S. Senators Chris Van Hollen and Chris Coons met with Tigray refugees in Umrakoba camp Sudan.
- Chris Coons said: “there are still Eritrean troops all throughout Tigray and other places in Ethiopia.” He added that “the conflict is not over and not resolved in Tigray” and urged accountability for human rights violations, a ceasefire, the removal of foreign troops (Eritrean troops in particular), and a path towards a resolution of the conflict.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 144 - 10 May 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported Situation in Tigray (per 09 May)

- In a new report published on Friday, the UN has said that aid convoys are being blocked.
- Relief Society of Tigray (REST) says Aman Desta, one of its inventory control officers was killed by Eritrean and Ethiopian troops while distributing emergency food in Kola Tembien, Guya sub-district.
- The report said that out of a cluster of 19 thousand children under five, 431 were found to be severely malnourished. Similarly, out of 4,447 women, 2,721 were found to be acutely malnourished.
- MSF is also reporting numbers about malnutrition; Out of 309 children screened in remote clinics, 26% were found to have malnutrition, and 6 percent had severe malnutrition.
- These MSF numbers however do not account for the entire region. In some areas, the level of severe malnutrition among children went up to 12%. Many other areas have also not been reached.
- Dedebit Media said hundreds of Eritrean troops were killed and wounded by Tigray defense forces at GerihuSernay, near the Ethio-Eritrea border.
- According to Ethio-forum, Eritrean troops have destroyed the Mereb Bridge that connects Eritrea to central Tigray from the Eritrean side. The Mereb Bridge was donated by The Netherlands two decades ago, as a contribution to the border agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia.
- Reported that Eritrean and Ethiopian forces have shelled the town of Hawzien, Eastern Tigray with heavy artillery and rockets.

Reported International Situation (per 09 May)

- On Thursday, 6 May, newly appointed US Special Envoy to the Horn of Africa, Jeffrey Feltman, paid a visit to Asmara, Eritrea, for a 3-hour meeting with President Isaias Afewerki. It was the first time in several years that a senior US official was able to meet with high-level Eritrean officials in Eritrea.
- On Friday, 7 May 2021, Feltman arrived in Sudan for a two-day visit.
- Payton Knopf, Deputy to US Envoy for Horn of Africa Jeffrey Feltman, and part of the US delegation visiting Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Sudan, stated: "We have seen a really fundamental shift in the security and political environment in Ethiopia, the most fundamental shift since the Prime Minister came to power in 2018 that has involved the escalation of violence, substantial closing of political space, and a number of other issues that have called into question the reform agenda. Ethiopia's transition as originally envisioned when Prime Minister Abiy came to power is really dead. Every major opposition figure or voice of dissent against Abiy is now in prison, and that is really the opposite of what we want to see."
- In an earlier meeting of April 28th with the Ethiopia Contact Group, Feltman had laid out US concerns about the conflict in Tigray.
- The US, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, Finland, and the EU expressed support for a donor conference to increase humanitarian funding to the region.
- The UK, US, Sweden, and Norway voiced the need for stronger sanctions against Eritrea for its non-withdrawal from Tigray.

- Denmark and the UK emphasized transparency and the need to review the Terms of Reference that will lead a joint UN (OHCHR) and Ethiopian (ECHR) investigation into crimes and atrocities committed during the conflict.
- The Netherlands, Sweden, Ireland, and Denmark said that if the international community should call for a postponement of the upcoming elections, it should only do so privately.
- The US, France, the Netherlands, and Ireland called for a balanced and strategic approach to approving projects at international financial institutions.
- On Eritrea, the meeting said the indicated withdrawal is not taking place, and the Eritreans have remained active across the region, committing human rights abuses, including extrajudicial killings, sexual violence, destruction of civilian infrastructure, and causing massive displacement.
- US Acting Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Foreign Affairs, Robert Godec, said that on the issue of elections, it is becoming increasingly clear that free and fair elections will not be possible.
- The EU said that it had intended to send election monitors, however, the EU was unable to come to an agreement with the Ethiopian government on a Memorandum of Understanding. The disagreement included the deployment of satellite phones with the monitoring teams.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 9 May)

- An extraordinary interview by the Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Abu Matthias, is smuggled out of Ethiopia and aired by CNN. The patriarch calls the Ethiopian war in Tigray a 'genocide'.
- The comments were made in Addis Ababa, recorded one month ago. The Patriarch is under house arrest. He states that the Ethiopian government and its allies "want to destroy the people of Tigray."
- The Patriarch also said that he is not allowed to speak out, or make public statements, saying that "all my messages have been banned and prevented." and that "until now I have not had the opportunity to display my message through the media".
- The Patriarch spoke of the massacres that took place in Aksum, the holy city of the Ethiopian Orthodox church, the destruction of Debre Damo, and other holy places.
- The Patriarch expressed his anguish over the fate of the people of Tigray; the Sexual Violence against Women and rape, the destruction of farmers land and tools, destroying their livelihoods, the looting and killings of innocent people.
- The Patriarch called on the International community to take action to stop the genocide.
- Reuters Special investigative report says across Ethiopia, Tigrayans are being fired and jailed since fighting erupted in the Tigray region.
- Reuters spoke to more than two dozen Tigrayans who said their careers and personal lives have been upended due to their ethnicity.
- Tigrayans interviewed by Reuters said there was a new wave of arrests in the capital in April 2021. Around 300 Tigrayans were held in a warehouse-style building in Addis Ababa.
- The arrests included a priest, two women with children, and a beggar. They were arrested after showing Tigrayan issued ID cards. The crackdown has not been limited to soldiers. Tigrayan diplomats, professors, journalists, business people, and also the families of Tigrayan soldiers also say that they are feeling the backlash.
- The Ethiopian Election board has extended voter registration by 15 days for the general election on June 5th outside of the Somali and Afar region.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 145 - 11 May 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported Situation in Tigray (per 10 May)

- A document addressed to the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church, obtained by the Telegraph claims a number of mass killings have taken place over the past five months in Tigray, stating that at least 78 priests were massacred in one zone of the Tigray region.
- The letter says that priests, deacons, choristers, and monks have been massacred over the last five months in Tigray.
- Half a dozen survivors confirmed this to the Telegraph and said that both the Ethiopian national army soldiers and Eritrean troops took part in these massacres.
- The letter the Telegraph received was sent on 15 April and lists the number of clergymen killed over the past five months in the church administrations.
- Witnesses told Telegraph that the churches of Gergera Maryam, Adi-Zeban Karagiorgis, Kidanemihret Bosa, Teksa, and the monastery of Da Abune Ayzi are among those, where churchmen were killed.
- The Telegraph report said Kahsay and his deacon son Halfom fled their homes to the nearby mountains of Seharti district after receiving news that the Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers were raiding churches. Two days later Halfom returned back to the church in the village to see if the situation had improved.
- "I begged my son not to go back. He promised me he would return. But he did not return. The Eritrean soldiers killed my son," said Kahsay. "I learned a week later the villagers picked up my son's body. I did not attend his burial. He was only 25."
- Three witnesses told the Telegraph that Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers specifically target Saint's celebration days to execute members of the church.
- "In the afternoon of 9 January 2021, there were many of us in the church of Adi'Zeban Karagiorgis. We were there to celebrate the birth of the Virgin Mary," said one witness. "Suddenly, eight Ethiopian soldiers entered the churchyard. The soldiers picked 12 young deacons between the ages of 15 and 20. They took them out and shot them down," he says.
- Hadera, who survived a massacre at the Gergera Da Mariam church said there have been various killings and massacres since early December 2020. The 76-year-old says he was praying on 1 February 2021 when 12 Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers barged into the sacred room of the church.
- "They entered the holy room with their shoes and shouted over us saying you are our enemies because you have comforted and preached to the villagers that this shall pass. You should not have done that," said Hadera.
- He added: "There were six priests in the room. They shot us all and left the church. My friends died. It is nothing short of a miracle I survived."
- Globe and Mail said monasteries and holy shrines have been destroyed in Tigray and churches were burned everywhere as well as the blood of priests and deacons continues to spill.
- The report said a list of damaged religious sites and the slain priests and monks have been compiled and it includes 14 churches and four monasteries damaged by shelling and looting by Ethiopian and Eritrean troops since the war began last November.
- Kedir Kiyar, spokesman for the International Association of Muslims in Tigray said: "Nothing has been done to hold anyone accountable."

- “Eritrean soldiers entered a historic mosque, near the town of Nebelet, shot dead a pair of brothers who were guardians of the mosque, and then looted it of its valuables before hitting it with heavy weaponry and damaging it significantly,” Kiyar added.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 10 May)

- “Addis Standard (AS) report says ethnic Tigrayans who were repatriated from Saudi Arabia on 5 April 2021 have been kept in detention centers in Addis Ababa.
- The report said the returnees were jailed in Saudi Arabia and welcomed to Addis Ababa with yet another arrest. They told Addis Standard: “We were detained without charge after being arrested by Addis Ababa police; later we were released on bail.”
- “I was having coffee with my friends when they took me. The police approached us and asked to see our IDs; then we were taken to ‘amistegna’ police station,” said Elias.
- According to Elias, the police then explained to them that the reason for their arrest was the violation of Covid-19 preventive measures. “After they took us and we reached Gelan, it was clear that we were arrested because of our ethnic identity. All of the inmates were ethnic Tigrayans,” he said.
- He added that there were over 500 ethnic Tigrayans at the detention center among which about 40 were Saudi repatriates. Some of them were from Addis Ababa while the rest were people who recently arrived from Tigray.
- Elias said: “We were held in cold cells for a month until suddenly we were released on the guarantee of our ID cards.” He added saying that “I left hundreds of prisoners behind. Most of the prisoners don’t have family members in Addis Ababa and were daily laborers.”
- The Holy Synod said the message delivered by his Holiness Abune Mathias, Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church on the situation of Tigray is personal and not the position of the church.
- According to the secretary-general of the Holy Synod, Abune Mathias’s speech is an issue that has not been discussed or decided by the Holy Synod and does not represent the Holy Synod.
- A journalist working for the Oromia Broadcasting Network was gunned down near his home. Police say that he was killed by OLF-Shene militants. He is the second journalist killed in Ethiopia, following Dawit Kebede, who was killed in Mekelle in January 2021.
- The National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) has responded to a letter by 5 US senators which laid out concerns at the state of the upcoming Ethiopian elections.
- NEBE says that stakeholders have had robust participation in the “initial” organisation of the elections and that this 6th general election is the most transparent in Ethiopian history.
- They also say that reform at this stage would “carry significant technical, financial, political, and security risks” and “imperil the integrity, credibility, inclusivity, and timeliness of the electoral process.”

Reported International Situation (per 10 May)

- U.S House of Foreign Affairs Committee representatives G. W. Meeks and M. McCaul said: “We are deeply concerned by the failure of the government of Ethiopia and Eritrea to honor their public commitments to withdraw Eritrean forces from Ethiopia. The only viable path toward a durable cessation of hostilities and inclusive political dialogue will not be found through military action.
- U.S Ambassador to Ethiopia, Geeta Pasi hosted his holiness Abune Mathias, Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, at her residence and discussed the current situation in Ethiopia and specifically the humanitarian crisis in Tigray, including his recent public message.
- The UN said around 120 former peacekeepers from Ethiopia have sought asylum in Sudan and were taken to a location where they can safely undertake their refugee status to be determined.
- The personnel were set to be repatriated as part of the phased withdrawal of the UNAMID from western Sudan’s Darfur region. “As of now, 120 former UNAMID peacekeepers who were due to be repatriated have sought international protection,” said a UN peacekeeping spokesperson.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 146 - 12 May 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported Situation in Tigray (per 11 May)

- Dimtsi Weyane (DW) International TV released a battlefield report citing Tigray defense forces spokesperson Gebre Gebretsadik and said in recent weeks over 6,300 Ethiopian and Eritrean forces were killed and wounded by Tigray defense forces. Only 34 soldiers were captured.
- From 03 to 05 May 2021, there was heavy fighting between Tigray Defense Forces and ENDF allied forces in areas near Yechilay, Shawa'ta-Hegum, and Finariwa, Kola Tembien Woreda. In these three days of fierce fighting, over 2,605 (1,088 killed and 1,517 wounded) Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers were incapacitated. In addition, many weapons, ammunition, and other military equipment were also captured.
- On 07 May 2021, Tigray defense forces took an offensive against nine divisions of Ethiopian and Eritrean forces that were coming from three different positions at Koraro near Hawzien, Megeb, Digum, and Adi A'ikor. In this fierce fighting, more than 1,896 Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers were killed and over 1,813 were wounded.
- In the fight on 07 May 2021, Eritrean Defense Forces 25th and 27th infantry, as well as 46th and 47th mechanized divisions participated. The ENDF's 13th, 20th, 23rd, 31st, and 33rd divisions also participated.
- In addition, 3 Mortar, 1 Dshk, 14 Bren, many Kalashnikovs, sniper rifles, and other ammunition and military equipment were captured.
- A deliberate campaign to prevent farming is unfolding in the Tigray region, a top regional official said, warning that the result will be starvation.
- "There is a campaign that has been started to prevent farming. Regrettably, this campaign is being done by some of those tasked with law enforcement," Abebe Gebrehiwot, deputy head of Tigray's interim government told state-owned Tigray TV.
- Abebe, an official appointed by the federal government who is in charge of economic affairs, said the effort includes blocking seeds from reaching parts of the region and telling Tigrayan farmers they aren't allowed to farm.
- He also said affected areas include Shire, currently home to tens of thousands of displaced Tigrayans, and Hawzen, which has seen intense fighting in recent days.
- "Vehicles transporting seeds are being blocked from moving beyond an area known as Kobo inside the Amhara region just south of Tigray," he added.
- Further, he said efforts to prevent the entry of seeds and efforts to stop farming have no other message than perhaps, "Let the people of Tigray perish with starvation."

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 11 May)

- Ethiopia has denied the killing of civilians in Tigray. Ethiopia's deputy Attorney General told reporters that a great majority of those killed in the November Axum massacre were fighters and not civilians.
- "It is established that the great majority of those killed in the said incident, though they were not in uniform, were members of the fighting force of TPLF who engaged the Eritrean forces. These forces attacked civilians in the streets. 93 individuals were killed due to the fighting", said Fikadu Tsega.
- His comments contradict reports by multiple independent accounts.

- Reports detailing the official version of what happened in the historic city of Axum by Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Amnesty International (AI) blamed Eritrean troops fighting in Tigray. It said the deaths were mostly civilians.
- According to Amnesty, Eritrean troops went on a rampage and systematically killed hundreds of civilians in cold blood.

Reported Situation in Horn region (per 11 May)

- The Commission for Refugees (COR) of Sudan said it has transferred Ethiopian soldiers to refugee camps after they sought political asylum in Sudan.
- The asylum seekers are from the Tigray region and fear for their life after the eruption of the war between the federal government and the Tigray forces in northern Ethiopia.
- "The first batch of asylum seekers left El Fasher airport via a UN plane to Kassala airport in eastern Sudan and was transported to Um Gargorah camp for the Ethiopian refugees," said the Commissioner for Refugees in North Darfur.
- The total number of soldiers who applied for asylum has reached 120, including 14 women.
- According to Sudan Tribune (ST), Sudan has officially informed the United Arab Emirates (UAE) of its adherence to placing border markers with Ethiopia before entering into investment projects in the disputed Al-Fashaqa area.
- The head of the Sovereign Council, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, returned to Khartoum after talks with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed on Sunday. In statements to reporters, the Minister of the Cabinet Affairs Khaled Omer Youssef said Sudan conveyed to the UAE its position on the Emirati initiative on the border dispute with Ethiopia.
- "Sudan has conveyed to the Emirates its clear position in the (border) agreement that has settled the issue since 1972," stressed Youssef.

Reported International Situation (per 11 May)

- The U.S. said it strongly supports democratization in Ethiopia as it nears a national election on June 5, while noting a free, fair, and credible election can happen only with a conducive electoral environment.
- U.S. Sec. Antony Blinken had pressed for Ethiopia's and Eritrea's commitments to withdraw Eritrean troops from Tigray immediately, in full, and in a verifiable manner.
- "If that (a conducive electoral environment) is to be achieved, the government of Ethiopia must respect the freedom of assembly, the freedom of speech, political participation, and access to internet and information," said State Department spokesperson Ned Price.
- Price said political parties should discourage violence, and state security forces should demonstrate restraint in the use of force and partisan tactics: "We're also working closely with international partners to promote community-based dialogue to minimize violence surrounding the elections."
- "As we consider our aid to Ethiopia, we want to make sure that in the first instance, we're not doing anything that would place a further burden on the people of Tigray, who are in such humanitarian plight," said Price.
- Former U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia David Shinn told VOA it is not possible to have an election in the Tigray region, adding "there are some real concerns as to the viability of an election on June 5th" in Ethiopia, outside of Tigray.
- Former Ambassador and Assistant Sec. of State, Herman J. Cohen said the deaths and displacement of several hundred thousand citizens in Tigray, as well as the serious instability in Oromia, make it impossible to accomplish a valid election as early as next June 5.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 147 - 14 May 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Sexual and human rights violations (per 13 May)

- A doctor treating a woman at Axum Referral Hospital told CNN that the hospital had seen a spike in sexual assault cases over recent weeks, but that the rise was just “the tip of the iceberg,” as many were too scared to seek medical services.
- CNN report says an alarming number of women are being gang-raped, drugged and held hostage in the conflict, in which sexual violence is being used as a weapon of war and its use linked to genocide in Tigray.
- An autopsy photo of the young woman seen by CNN showed her internal organs spilling out from a wound in her lower abdomen.
- "She came to our emergency department and she had a sign of life initially. [But] if you find blood for a patient, it's only one or two units and one or two units could not save this woman. She bled [out] and she died," said the doctor.
- Irish's Foreign Affairs Minister, Simon Coveney said there is growing evidence of sexual violence being used as a tool of war in the conflict in the Tigray region.
- Mr. Coveney said Ireland is seen as “credible” because of its very strong relationship with Ethiopia and our insistence on shining a spotlight on what’s happening.
- “The Ethiopian government continues to advocate at all levels for a ceasefire and a full independent investigation is needed so we can hold people to account who have committed crimes against humanity,” he added.
- He also said: “There are multiple credible and harrowing reports of ongoing human rights violations including in particular sexual violence being used as a tool of war in Tigray.”

Eritrean forces in Tigray (per 13 May)

- Fierce fighting between Tigray defense forces and Ethiopian and Eritrean forces has continued on various fronts of the Tigray region.
- CNN report says Eritrean troops are operating with total impunity in the Tigray region, killing, raping, and blocking humanitarian aid to starving populations more than a month after Prime Minister Abiy pledged to the international community that they would leave.
- A CNN team traveling through Tigray's central zone witnessed Eritrean soldiers, some disguising themselves in old Ethiopian military uniforms, manning checkpoints, obstructing and occupying critical aid routes, roaming the halls in one of the few operating hospitals, and threatening medical staff.
- The report said Ethiopia's government has severely restricted access to the media until recently, and a state-enforced communications blackout concealed events in the region, making it challenging to gauge the extent of the crisis or verify survivors' accounts.

- According to the report Eritrean troops aren't just working hand in glove with the Ethiopian government, assisting in a merciless campaign against the Tigrayan people, in some pockets they're fully in control and waging a reign of terror.
- The report added that Ethiopian security officials working with Tigray's interim administration said the Ethiopian government has no control over Eritrean soldiers and that Eritrean forces had blocked roads into central Tigray for over two weeks and in the northwestern part of the region for a month.
- CNN said its efforts to reach Axum were thwarted by both Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers multiple times over several days and the team was blocked by soldiers at three locations.
- The report further said even after being granted entry to Axum by the Ethiopian military, the CNN team was obstructed by Eritrean troops controlling a checkpoint near Adigrat town.
- CNN report added that Eritrean troops were wearing a mixture of their official light-colored Eritrean Defence Forces fatigues and a woodland camouflage with a green beret, which military experts verified as tallying with old Ethiopian army uniforms.
- Aid agencies also told CNN that they had also been turned back by Eritrean soldiers manning a checkpoint on a desolate mountain top overlooking Adigrat town.
- Ethiopian military sources confirmed to CNN that Eritrean soldiers were in control of key checkpoints along the route to Axum. The military sources said they had requested multiple times for the Eritreans to allow cars and convoys through, but had been refused.
- CNN also said Eritrean soldiers have been blocking and looting food relief in multiple parts of Tigray, including in Samre and Gijet, southwest of Mekele.

Reported situation in Tigray (per 13 May)

- According to the CNN report, many rural border towns in Tigray like Chila have been blocked off from receiving aid since the beginning of the conflict and humanitarian workers say famine could have already arrived there and they would have no way of knowing.
- "Based on guesswork there is a sense that in these areas that we are not able to access, out in the countryside, for instance, places are falling into pockets of famine. But we're not able to verify that and that's part of the problem," said Thomas Thompson, the UN World Food Programme's emergency coordinator.
- Human Rights Watch (HRW) said the Ethiopian Attorney General's findings ignore "widespread pillaging that occurred the week Ethiopian forces captured the town and the horrific massacre by Eritrean forces that unfolded over 24-hours from the afternoon of November 28 -29, 2020."

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 13 May)

- The accreditation of a journalist of the New York Times has been revoked by Ethiopian authorities after conducting interviews on the victims of sexual violence in Tigray.
- The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission said it is alarmed by the public parading and extrajudicial killing of a suspected criminal offender, Amanuel Wondimu, in Dembi Dollo, Kelem Wollega Zone of the Oromia regional state by security forces.
- The Human Rights Commission condemned all forms of extrajudicial killings in the strongest terms and reiterates its message on the use of only lawful means for all law enforcement operations.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 148 - 17 May 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Tigray (per 16 May)

- Amnesty International stated that recent findings by the Ethiopian Attorney General's office on Aksum are not credible and raise concern that "the purpose of the investigation is to cover up the massacre."
- The Director of Crisis Response, Joanne Mariner, stated that several of the claims made by the AG findings regarding the perpetrators being TPLF fighters "stretched the bounds of credulity".
- Amnesty International calls for an independent investigation in the Aksum massacre.
- Reported that more than 19 civilians including children were indiscriminately killed in Guh village, Hawzien, Eastern Tigray by Eritrea and Ethiopian forces.
- Eritrean troops have been bombing villages and areas across the road from Adigrat to Adwa by heavy artillery from their base from the town of Muglat, Eastern Tigray.
- The Guardian has released an interview with a catholic sister working in Mekelle. In the interview the sister says that "Rape is happening to girls as young as eight and to women of 72. It is so widespread, I go on seeing it everywhere, thousands. This rape is in public, in front of family, husbands, in front of everyone." She continued by saying "Every single woman, not only once. It is intentional, deliberate. I am confident in that from what I am witnessing."
- The catholic nun also said that IDPs in Mekelle are sleeping with 40 to 65 people in a single room. for 3 to 6 thousand people there are four toilets for men and four for women.

Fighting in Tigray (per 16 May)

- Ethiopia has claimed that it has killed a hundred Tigrayan fighters trying to cross the border into Ethiopia from Sudan.
- Tigray sources dispute that Tigray defence forces have crossed the Ethiopia-Sudan border, stating that the Tigray forces are in many parts of western Tigray and these forces engaged in the fighting in Western Tigray.
- Tigray defence forces have dispatched brochures in Western Tigray in many woredas (districts), motivating the people to continue their resistance against the invasion.
- Reported that fresh deployment of Eritrean troops into Tigray has continued. Recently, three buses loaded with Eritrean troops have arrived at the town of Adwa, Central Tigray.
- Leaked video footage shows Eritrean troops shelling villages in Tigray. The troops in the video were heard saying in their own language (Tigrigna), that the heavy weapons they were firing aimed at massacring people in the towns of Shire, Axum, and Adwa.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 16 May)

- Ethiopia has revoked the press credentials of New York Times reporter Simon Marks in early March. Appeals by the NYT have been rejected. The credentials were revoked after Marks returned from Tigray.
- The US has called on Ethiopia to respect freedom of the press.

- Ethiopia has postponed the national elections. The head of Ethiopia's election board said it would be impossible to hold a planned June 5 vote due to mounting logistical issues.
- "The vote will not happen on June 5... We can't tell you the date as the board has to examine the inputs it received from parties," said Birutkan Mideksa, Chairwoman of the election board.
- Birutkan Mideksa also said that the election postponement would not be longer than three weeks.
- A leaked document revealed that the Amhara regional government has requested the federal Ethiopian government around 100 million Birr (nearly 2 million euros) in funding for the treatment of wounded soldiers in the war on Tigray.
- Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) High Command said they have "detained" three Chinese nationals involved in mining operations around Medi, West Wellega, Oromia regional state.
- The OLA statement said mining companies operating in the area have been responsible for the displacement of many farming communities that were not adequately compensated.
- Reported in social media that Dr. Birhanu Nega, the leader of the opposition party EZEMA was beaten by a group of men in the town of Woldiya, Amhara regional state.

Reported International Situation (as per 16 May)

- The EU has condemned the blocking of Humanitarian aid to Tigray and said in a statement that humanitarian aid blockades by military forces in Tigray are severely impeding the ability for assistance to reach rural areas, where the humanitarian crisis is at the worst level.
- "The use of humanitarian aid as a weapon of war is a grave violation of international humanitarian law and is putting at risk the lives of millions of people. Immediate and full-scale assistance should be provided, in order to avoid starvation" added the statement.
- U.S. Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Jeffrey Feltman said increasing political and ethnic polarization throughout Ethiopia is deeply concerning. "The atrocities being perpetrated in Tigray and the scale of the humanitarian emergency are unacceptable," said Feltman.
- Feltman added the U.S will work with its "international allies and partners to secure a ceasefire, end this brutal conflict, provide the life-saving assistance that is so urgently needed, and hold those responsible for human rights abuses and violations accountable".
- GOP Rep. Michael McCaul of Texas has said that Ethiopia and Eritrea are not holding up their public commitments and calls on the Biden Administration to "use all available tools, including sanctions and other restrictive measures, to hold all perpetrators accountable and bring an end to this conflict."
- U.S Sec. A. Blinken condemned the conduct of forces that continue to carry out atrocities and hinder distribution of humanitarian assistance in Tigray and those responsible must be held accountable.
- The US Senate Committee on Foreign relations will hold a briefing on Challenges and Opportunities for the United States in the Horn of Africa on Monday 17 March. Feltman will be among those testifying.
- It also warned that those responsible for deliberately preventing timely access will be held to account.
- EEPA is holding a Webinar on Conflict related Sexual Violence against Women in Tigray on May 25th, 14:00-16:00 EAT, 13:00 - 15:00 CET, 07.00 - 09.00 USA East.
- The EEPA Webinar will be opened by Hon. Julia Duncan-Casell, former Liberian minister of Gender and Social Protection, and it will include testimonies from women in Tigray. The registration link is: <https://bit.ly/3hqFbx1>

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 149 - 18 May 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Tigray (per 17 May)

- MSF report says huge numbers of people living in the Tigray region's remote and mountainous rural areas have been cut off from essential healthcare for six months, almost invisible to the outside world.
- "When a small MSF mobile team reached the remote village of Adiftaw for the first time, they found the health post had been looted and partially destroyed," said the report.
- The report said medical files, broken equipment, and emptied medicine packets were scattered across the floors of every room. None of the beds had mattresses and there were no staff.
- "When we arrived in Tigray in late 2020, we found that the health system had almost completely collapsed," said MSF emergency coordinator Tommaso Santo. "Once we had set up support in hospitals in big towns such as Adigrat, Axum and Shire, it seemed essential to us to reach the more remote areas where people's needs are greater."
- Santo said: "We are finding people with very little access to drinking water and food distributions, and who cannot do commercial activity due to some markets being closed. Many people are still living in fear in a situation of insecurity."
- Reported that hospitals refurbished by the MSF in the Tigray region were looted and destroyed by Eritrean troops a few days later.
- Dedebit Media said more than 20 ENDF commanders have surrendered to the Tigray defense forces.
- According to Tigray Media House (TMH), Ethiopian soldiers were seen intimidating and beating civilian patients who were being treated at Axum Referral hospital, Central Tigray.
- Reports indicate that there was active and random shelling to the town of Hawzen and its vicinity. More than 20 civilians have been killed and 8 family members are among the victims.
- Reported that over 300 households of ethnic Amhara have been relocated to Adabay, Western Tigray.
- More than seventeen buses loaded with ethnic Amhara's were also relocated to the town of Humera, Western Tigray.
- A letter issued on 10 May 2021 by the Bureau of Rural Land Administration and Use of the Amhara State officially announced leasing of huge plots of land to potential investors in Western Tigray.
- These land plots were previously owned by ethnic Tigrayans residing in western Tigray before they were forcibly displaced.
- In a statement, Seb-Hidri Civil society Tigray said it strongly condemns the ethnic cleansing, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide committed by the Amhara regional state in Western Tigray.
- Tigray defense forces have dispatched brochures in many Woredas of the Western Tigray motivating the people to continue their resistance against the ENDF, Amhara, and Eritrean forces.

- Many ethnic Amhara that were settled in western Tigray very recently are leaving the area fearing fighting could erupt anytime in western Tigray.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 17 May)

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia says the campaign to exert “undue pressure” against the country is regrettable.
- “In spite of the relentless efforts by the government to engage positively and constructively on concerns raised by partners, it is being given a cold shoulder,” said the ministry.
- The ministry said the Ethiopian government is being forced to question the motives of some of the partners, particularly given the public statements and pronouncements they made recently.
- The ministry added: “They seem to be short of showing a genuine desire to understand and help Ethiopia overcome its current challenges, rather, they would only be counterproductive and exacerbating situations.”
- The ministry further said it should be clear that the push by partners to involve the TPLF in the national dialogue process is unacceptable. TPLF is an outlawed group.
- The ministry has also dismissed aid concerns. “There were indeed difficulties in accessing some pocket areas in Tigray due to security issues but that has now been addressed,” said the ministry.
- The Ethiopian government is giving certificates to the families of soldiers who died in the war on Tigray.
- Addis Standard said gunmen in western Oromia have killed five government employees when they were traveling from Kondella woreda to Mendi.
- Among those killed was Waqqari Kajella, former head of the western Wellega zone peace and security bureau head, and his colleagues.
- Western Wellega zone administrator Elias Umata, quoted accusing the perpetrators as being “Shene gunmen who call themselves the Oromo Liberation Army, and whom the government recently designated as a terrorist organization.”
- The Amaro Special Woreda communication bureau said three civilians were killed, two wounded and more than 6,000 people displaced in the latest attack in Amaro Woreda of the SNNPRS.
- Sudan Motion said unconfirmed reports that the Benshangul-Gumuz Liberation Front has taken control of the Mahal camp, one of the largest camps of ENDF soldiers, which is 10 Km away from the GERD.

Reported International Situation (as per 17 May)

- WHO DG, Tedros Adhanom described the situation in Tigray as “horrific, very horrific” and says the region is facing a horrifying situation with people dying of hunger and health services being destroyed.
- Tedros pointed out that some 5 million people in the region are now in need of humanitarian aid, and especially food. “Many people have started dying actually because of hunger, severe and acute malnutrition is becoming rampant,” he said.
- He also condemned indiscriminate killings and the widespread use of sexual violence in the conflict. “Rape is rampant. I don’t think there was that scale anywhere else in the world actually,” he added.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 150 - 19 May 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Tigray (per 18 May)

- A priest from the Catholic Eparchy of Adigrat says killings, abductions, and rape still occurring in Tigray.
- According to the priest, the targets for killings are men and boys, who are being eliminated by armed forces and their allies, and women and girls, who are being repeatedly gang-raped to weaken any resistance.
- "They want to annihilate Tigray. By killing the men and boys, they are trying to destroy any future resistance. They want to make sure that nobody can question their actions in the future," said the priest. "They are raping and destroying women to ensure that they cannot raise a community in the future. They are using rape and food as weapons of war."
- The priest added killings and torture are breeding nationalism among Tigrayans. He said men or boys who cannot attend school due to the war and can't find food or fear being executed were joining the rebel ranks in droves, angry over the atrocities.
- "They don't want to die of hunger or be killed like their peers. They are joining the rebels so that they can live," he said.
- An interfaith group, which includes the Catholic Church said: "Relics have been stolen, items of worship have been burned, belongings of believers have been desecrated. And religious sisters and nuns have been violated and raped, mothers and daughters have been gang-raped."
- An article by Alex de Waal in *OpinioJuris* says as soon as the conflict erupted, we were warned of the risk of famine. But in the face of the ruthless determinations of the leaders of Ethiopia and Eritrea to starve the civilian population of Tigray, the UN, AU, and donor governments have done nothing of significance.
- Alex de Waal said not only has the Ethio-Eritrean coalition massively reduced the food available to Tigrayans, but they have systematically reduced the Tigray region to a state of destitution.
- "The perpetrators of these starvation crimes are the Ethiopian federal forces, the Eritrean army, and Amhara forces," said Alex de Waal.
- Ethiopian soldiers, armed with guns and grenades, have raided Axum hospital in the Tigray region, reportedly because they spoke to CNN.
- Dimtsi Weyane (DW) International said the Ethiopian government has used an internationally banned chemical weapon (a poisonous gas) in the villages of Tigray.
- According to DW International, on 13 May 2021, an Eritrean MIG-29 fighter jet bombed the village of Azmera. Three civilians were killed and another three injured. 11 donkeys were also killed.
- Reported that Leadership member of the National Congress of Great Tigray Party's, Kibrom Berhe has been detained from his home in Addis Ababa and a few hours later he was released.
- Tghat, a website documenting atrocities committed in Tigray said after the ethnic cleansing of Tigrayans from Western Tigray, the Amhara regional government proceeds to lease and distribute their farmlands to Amhara investors.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 18 May)

- Ethiopia's top Prosperity Party official and governor of the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE), Mr. Yinager Dessie accuses the U.S. of "working to disintegrate Ethiopia."

- OCHA said in North Shewa and Oromo Special Zones of Amhara Region 358,000 displaced people were identified due to conflict and are in dire need of humanitarian assistance and healthcare services.
- Addis Standard says residents in the West Arsi zone of Oromia State have been asked to present their voters' registration card to get any official paperwork in government administration offices otherwise they will be denied service.
- Metekel Zone Communication Bureau said an MoU was signed between the Benishangul Gumuz regional state and an unnamed "armed group" that would see members of the later take up leadership positions in the region, acquire urban and rural land, as well as receive credit facilities.
- Accordingly, 2 regional, 3 zonal, and 4 woreda level positions will be made available to the members of the unnamed armed group. Urban plots for housing and rural land for farming will be made available.
- Ethiopian Media Authority (EMA), the federal media regulatory authority responsible for media licensing and registration, said it has issued a "written warning" to The Associated Press (AP).
- EMA DG, Mohammed Idriss said the authority issued the written warning in connection with AP's coverage of the latest decision by the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) to postpone the 6th national election.
- Mohammed said AP's reporting that the election was postponed due to the war in Tigray was far from the truth.

Reported International Situation (as per 18 May)

- The EU foreign service said that the humanitarian situation in Ethiopia's Tigray region is worse than ever since the conflict began last November, with 5.2 million people needing "emergency food assistance" to "avoid starvation."
- "Blocking humanitarian aid as a weapon of war is a grave violation of international humanitarian law," added the EU foreign service, amid previous EU threats to hold Ethiopian officials accountable by putting them under EU visa-bans and asset-freezes.
- The State Department said the U.S. is committed to end the brutal conflict in Ethiopia's northern Tigray region which has been ongoing for six months.
- It also said the U.S. would work to secure a ceasefire between the Tigray Defence Forces (TDF) and the Ethiopian army which is supported by Eritrean forces.
- "The U.S. will work with our international allies and partners to secure a ceasefire, end this brutal conflict, provide the life-saving assistance that is so urgently needed, and hold those responsible for human rights abuses and violations accountable," said the State Department in a statement.
- US Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Jeffrey Feltman said he had held talks with Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and other officials, and that the country's problems could be resolved.
- Also during his meeting with Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki, Mr. Feltman said Eritrean troops should immediately withdraw from Ethiopia.
- The statement also said while calling for the immediate resumption of the suspended tripartite talks, "the U.S will provide political and technical support so that Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt can reach a final agreement over the controversial dam Ethiopia is building on River Nile."

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 151 - 20 May 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Tigray (per 19 May)

- Doctors told CNN that Ethiopian soldiers armed with machine guns, sniper rifles, and grenades raided a hospital in the Tigray region twice this week in retribution.
- Medical staff at the University Teaching and Referral Hospital of Axum said that the soldiers stormed the hospital in the early hours of Sunday morning, raiding the student dormitory, doctors, and patient wards, contaminating the operating room and stopping all surgical operations.
- "The troops returned again on Monday, after some medical staff and patients fled, searching for people they accused of 'tarnishing the country's image' in news reports, doctors told CNN.
- The soldiers also demanded a "list of the names of doctors who will not cooperate with the military's investigation into the hospital."
- "The soldiers removed bandages and intravenous fluids from some patients and pointed their guns at doctors and nurses who objected," one doctor said.
- MSF confirmed the incident to CNN saying that several soldiers "went ward by ward looking for patients, intimidating caretakers and threatening health staff."
- Mari Carmen Viñoles, head of MSF emergency unit told CNN the organisation was "very concerned about the frequent violations of the neutrality of the medical mission by armed groups in Tigray."
- "I feel like I am living on an isolated planet, with no law or order. The world must open its eyes that people in Tigray are living in anarchy," said a staff at Axum University Teaching and Referral Hospital.
- One doctor, who is still at the hospital, told CNN over text message they are living in fear of what will happen when the soldiers next return. "Everyone in the hospital is now helpless, with either detention or death looming at any point in the future from now."
- The soldiers appeared to be looking for pro-TPLF fighters. "If they see any wounded patient, they go to that patient and ask, 'Are you a soldier with TPLF?'" said one doctor.
- Refugees near have told Al-Jazeera that they have not received any food supplies in the two months since they have arrived in Shire.
- Both refugees and locals are struggling to find any food, sometimes going a week long, and on occasion longer, without eating anything. The starvation is so bad that some refugees are getting very sick and tired, their bodies not accepting any food anymore. Everyone has lost a lot of weight.
- Even in Mekelle, there is a widespread lack of food. One refugee says that she has not eaten anything in four days, and gives everything to her daughter.
- Refugees in Mekelle also say how Eritrean soldiers have been pillaging and burning crops in April. In one case a refugee says that "They burned my neighbour, an old blind woman together with her crops and house;". Another was forced into the fire after he begged them to leave his crops alone.
- Refugees also say that fresh Eritrean troops relieved "those who had been stationed in the area for months."
- A Tigrayan Interim Administration Official told Al-Jazeera that "There is no response. Only in December, 8,000 displaced people in Mekelle received a food ration of 30 kilos. But the number [of people displaced] is growing each day".

- The official, who wanted to stay anonymous, also said that at least 8 people had died of hunger since the start of the conflict. However, there are likely to be many more.
- Another Tigrayan Interim official has said that starvation is being deliberately used to overcome the people of Tigray. He said that “The Eritreans are telling us they will burn the food trucks if we pass. The Ethiopian troops are also blocking aid. This is a deliberate act of starving the people”.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 19 May)

- Addis Standard said thirteen people including Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) leader Colonel Gemechu Ayana were reportedly taken by security forces after the court ordered their release.
- Lawyer Tuli Bayisa said 9 of the prisoners were released after the paperwork which took a long time to process while the remaining three of them remained in prison. The 9 prisoners were taken away by security forces wearing a uniform of the federal police and heavily armed.
- Tuli further said: “The security forces took the prisoners into a car and fled the area,” adding, “We don’t know where they took them.”
- Bench Sheko Zone Peace and Security Department Chief, Com. Dawit Timothios said 3 regular police officers and 6 special police officers were killed and 3 others injured by unknown forces attack in Sheko Woreda, Bench Sheko Zone, Aybera, and Sanka Kebeles.
- The author and politician, Andargachaw Tsige, and religious scholar Ustaz Abubeker have urged all Ethiopians to stand together and protest against the attempts being made by some Western nations to interfere in the affairs of Ethiopia against its sovereignty.
- Andargachaw Tsige, who is a British national also said: “I personally don’t care if the U.S government issues an entry ban on me and we should not hesitate to head to the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa in millions and burn their flag.”
- Furthermore, a group of prominent Ethiopians and artists will be dispatched to Embassies in Addis Ababa to submit letters and express opposition against those who try to meddle in the internal affairs of Ethiopia.

Reported International Situation (as per 18 May)

- USUN Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield said the U.S. is continuously working to take diplomatic actions to help bring about an end to the crisis in the Tigray region.
- “Jeffrey Feltman has just completed a visit to Ethiopia, and I have been actively engaged on this issue insisting that it will be put on the agenda of the Security Council (SC) and successfully get a statement out of the SC,” she added.
- USAID administrator Samantha Power and UN under-SecGen Lowcock met on Wednesday 19th May to discuss the growing risk of famine and the human rights crisis in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, as well as the urgent need to ensure humanitarian staff safety and strengthen coordination in order to support a scaled-up response in Tigray.
- Power underscored the urgent need for unhindered humanitarian access and an end to hostilities in Tigray, as well as U.S. concern about Ethiopian and Eritrean forces’ interference with humanitarian operations.
- U.S. Sec. of State A. Blinken has met with Finnish Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto and both expressed shared concern over the situation in the Horn of Africa, including in the Tigray region of Ethiopia.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 152 - 21 May 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Tigray (per 20 May)

- USAID is saying that early warning systems are detecting a category 5 food emergency in Tigray. This is the highest it can be. Over 5 million people need urgent aid in the region. Ethiopia needs to act “now” to ensure that food can be delivered.
- Reported that Eritrean and Ethiopian troops have shelled Bora Chellena and its vicinities in Southern Tigray with heavy artillery and rockets.
- Scores of civilians were reported to have been killed and villages were destroyed including an elementary school. Dozens of cattle were also killed.
- TMH said 19 civilians were killed by Eritrean troops after they were abducted weeks earlier from Haziawn, Eastern Tigray.
- The UN Population Fund says that funds are urgently needed to assist survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in Tigray.
- A 22-year-old woman told UNFPA that she “was running from place to place without food or shelter. I was in fear all the time... There was no safe place for me until I got to the safe house”.
- A social worker said that he saw “women and girls arriving here so traumatized and depressed due to prolonged suffering, distress and horrendous violence that they cry and cannot eat for days”.
- UNFPA says that gender-based violence is massively underreported and is only the “tip of the iceberg”. Even in normal circumstances, social and cultural factors ensure that women do not report rapes. A survey conducted in 2016 showed that only 23% of Sexual Assault survivors sought assistance.
- UNFPA says that only 29 percent of health facilities in Tigray are partially available to provide clinical management of rape; none are fully available.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 20 May)

- Communication Affairs Head of the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia said the general election is set to be held on 21 June 2021.
- The vote will not take place on June 21 in the seven constituencies in the Somali Region where complaints were lodged during the voter registration process.
- Neither will voting take place in areas where voter registration has not yet begun and where there are many IDPs. She also said that the voting process will not take place on the same day in the Metekel Zone of Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State. Voting at these venues will be considered “outside the current set June 21”.
- It has not been specified when elections in these regions will be held.
- The election board said that the election had been extended to allow election officials to receive training in connection with the election, counting votes, as well as the announcement of results.
- Ethiopia said GERD will begin a power generation trial run during the upcoming rainy season.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia stated that the construction of GERD has reached 80 percent and the second filling of the dam will be carried out as per the time schedule.

- The Scholars Council in Amhara National Regional State said in a letter to the U.S Embassy in Addis Ababa that the 'belligerent posture' taken by the U.S State Department only serves to put undue obstacle to the cause of justice and lasting peace in Ethiopia.
- The letter added taking unwarranted positions and attempts to impose unjust 'ultimatums' and 'musts' will subsequently result in unending conflict and massive humanitarian crises in the Horn region.

Reported Situation in the Horn (per 20 May)

- Al-Arabiya said there was a clash between Ethiopia and Sudan forces. The Sudanese army has regained control of 20,000 hectares of land after a fierce battle with Ethiopian militias.
- The foreign ministry of Egypt has rejected any unilateral actions of Ethiopia's GERD, including second filling, before reaching an agreement with concerned parties.
- Sudan Motion reported the entry of Egyptian ground forces into Sudan as part of an agreement between Sudanese forces and Egyptian armed forces.

Reported International Situation (as per 20 May)

- The US Senate has passed a unanimous resolution calling for Eritrean troops to withdraw from Tigray.
- The resolution, sponsored by Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman James E. Risch, also condemns human rights violations committed by the Eritrean military and called on Sec State Blinken to ensure a "full, independent, international investigation into all reports of human rights violations, abuses, and atrocities".
- The resolution also calls on Ethiopia to "release all opposition leaders, supporters, and activists detained on the basis of their political activity and views as well as journalists detained on the basis of their reporting, and respect the rights of all Ethiopians to free expression and political participation, without discrimination based on ethnicity, ideology, or political affiliation."
- As well as "convene a credible and countrywide process of national dialogue and reconciliation inclusive of all nonviolent political parties, ethnic communities, religious groups, and civil society organizations in Ethiopia to work toward the sustainable resolution of grievances and chart a democratic and peaceful path forward for the country;"
- The US has also called on "all armed actors in Ethiopia to safeguard the lives and activities of humanitarian workers throughout Ethiopia" and to "unhindered, consistent, and safe access for aid".
- It comes following the killing of a USAID worker by Eritrean and Ethiopian soldiers after he clearly identified himself as an aid worker.
- The U.S Embassy in Addis Ababa said it is monitoring calls on social media for protests at several embassies around Addis Ababa on 21 May and has cancelled consular services on that date.
- Earlier this week, Professor Mukesh Kapila stated that Genocide is being committed in Tigray.
- Lord David Alton stated that "Rape and sexual violence against women is being relentlessly used as a weapon of war against the women and girls of Tigray".
- Professor Jan Nyssen of Ghent University reports that "numerous women have been raped. The victims hide themselves and do not speak, but nurses cannot hold their tears, and the whole town knows the top-three of rapists: 1. (and by far) Eritrean soldiers, 2. Ethiopian soldiers, 3. Civilian perpetrators."
- On Saturday Helen Clark, the former Prime Minister of New Zealand, said "There is evidence of 'ethnic cleansing' in Western Tigray. If carried out with the intent of eliminating Tigrayans, it may be classified as genocide, Taken all together, the serious crimes being committed against Tigrayans, including massacres of civilians of all ages, may meet the definition of genocide."

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 153 - 24 May 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Tigray (per 23 May)

- The Telegraph said civilians in Tigray have suffered burns consistent with the use of white phosphorus, a potential war crime. Leading chemical weapon experts said the footage is consistent with white phosphorus, which is banned from use against human targets under international law.
- CNN reports that parts of Tigray are controlled by Eritrean troops and these have checkpoints on a major road artery sealing off Aksum. Humanitarian aid and journalists are not allowed through.
- CNN found fresh evidence of atrocities being committed in Tigray.
- The Consortium of Religious Institutions of Tigray documented that over 326 priests, deacons, Sunday student's and sheiks were massacred by Ethiopian and Eritrean troops in the Tigray region.
- The Consortium also denounced the genocidal war in Tigray and declared their solidarity with his Holiness Abune Mathias, the Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.
- OCHA says humanitarian access in Tigray remains unpredictable with incidents of denial of movement of relief cargo and confiscation of humanitarian vehicles and supplies by parties to the conflict.
- "Military checkpoints are aggressively searching humanitarian vehicles and regularly demanding permission from local authorities or the Northern Command," said OCHA.
- OCHA added food cluster partners reported access difficulties has reached at least 25 Woredas.
- In Eastern Zone, Agula checkpoint (south of Wukro) became the most significant bottleneck to humanitarian movements out of Mekelle over the past two weeks with multiple days-long closures due to security and military movements.
- OCHA said several partners were stopped, held back for hours, or sent back to Mekelle without completing their missions, affecting the delivery of health and relief supplies to main towns and hospitals in Adigrat, Adwa, and Axum.
- OCHA further said only about 1.8 million people of the 5.2 million in need of food assistance were reached since late March. And over 2 million people have been displaced by the conflict to date.
- OCHA added that US\$853 million is required to assist 5.2 million people until the end of the year, with almost US\$200 million needed by the end of July.
- Reported that 11 civilians were killed after Eritrean and Ethiopian forces shelled Bora Chellena and its vicinities, Southern Tigray by heavy artillery and rockets. Over a dozen were also injured.
- More than 100 homes of farmers including an elementary school were also destroyed by the shelling and over 150 cattle were killed.
- Over 50 trucks transporting food aid from Gondar to Shire, Northwestern Tigray were stopped by Amhara forces in Maytsebri, a town seized by Amhara forces. NGOs were also told to halt their job.
- Artists representing Tigray regional state at the so-called 'Ethiopia Week' were seen dressed in all black and used the occasion to highlight the ongoing "genocide" in Tigray, reported on social media.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 23 May)

- Ethiopia's Foreign Affairs Minister has denied the allegations of the use of a chemical weapon against the people of Tigray. It also labeled the charges as "malicious" and "beyond irresponsible".
- The Attorney General (AG) of Ethiopia said three Ethiopian soldiers have been convicted of rape and one of killing a civilian in Tigray, the first public statement that soldiers had been found guilty of crimes against civilians in the conflict, few days after the Attorney General reported no civilians death.

- The AG added investigation indicates that a total of 110 civilians have been killed by Eritrean troops in Axum on 28-29 November 2020, including 40 who were killed in home raids.
- New York Times (NYT) says Simon Marks, an Irish journalist working for The New York Times, was expelled by the Ethiopian government.
- NYT said Mr. Marks had been reporting extensively on the war in Tigray, where there are widespread accounts that the Ethiopian military and its Eritrean and militia allies are committing atrocities, including massacres and sexual assault.
- "It is alarming that the government of Ethiopia treated the journalist, Simon Marks, like a criminal, expelling him from the country without even letting him go home to get a change of clothing or his passport," said Michael Slackman, The Times's assistant managing editor for international.

Reported Situation in the Horn (per 23 May)

- According to Sudan Tribune (ST), Egyptian infantry forces has arrived in Sudan to participate in bilateral military exercises involving ground, naval, and air armies of the two countries.
- "Preparations have been completed for the launch of the joint military maneuver 'Guardians of the Nile' to confront any possible threats from 26-31 May," said the Sudanese army.
- Somali Guardian said a number of Somali recruits have recently escaped an Eritrean camp after they were sent to train there by Somalia's federal government.
- The news has sparked protest in the capital Mogadishu by parents demanding government explanation on the whereabouts of their missing sons and renewed fears by families that the boys might have been killed in the war in Tigray.

Reported International Situation (as per 23 May)

- POLITICO said the EU has demanded an investigation into the killing of an Ethiopian journalist early this month and expressed "serious concern" over the expulsion from the country of Simon Marks, an Irish reporter who publishes in the NYT.
- "The EU is seriously concerned about the shrinking space for freedom of the media and harassment, arrests as well as restrictions imposed on Ethiopian and international journalists in Ethiopia," said an EU spokesperson in a statement.
- Foreign Policy (FP) says the Biden administration has planned Visa-restrictions on Ethiopian officials over Tigray. The new measures are an "opening diplomatic salvo" and a "shot across the bow", and come amid deteriorating relations between Washington and Ahmed's administration.
- According to Bloomberg, the Biden administration has prepared economic sanctions against Ethiopia that could halt finance from the U.S. to Ethiopia, and loans by international financial institutions.
- The U.S. sanctions being considered will mainly affect financial support to Ethiopia's budget and will include a request that the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund withhold funding.
- The Guardian said the Biden administration is shifting to a more direct strategy to force Ahmed to end continuing human rights abuses in Tigray and allow free flow of much-needed humanitarian aid.
- EEPA is holding a Webinar on Conflict-related Sexual Violence against Women in Tigray on May 25th, 14:00-16:00 EAT, 13:00 - 15:00 CET, 07.00 - 09.00 USA East.
- The EEPA Webinar will be opened by Hon. Julia Duncan-Cassell, former Liberian Minister of Gender and Social Protection, and it will include testimonies from women in Tigray. The registration link is:

<https://bit.ly/3hqFbx1>

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 154 - 25 May 2021

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Reported International Situation (as per 24 May)

- The US has announced Visa restrictions on “any current or former Ethiopian or Eritrean government officials, members of the security forces, or other individuals—to include Amhara regional and irregular forces and members of the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF)—responsible for, or complicit in, undermining resolution of the crisis in Tigray. “
- It includes anyone who has “conducted wrongful violence” and “hindered access of humanitarian assistance”. Immediate family of these people might also be affected.
- The US is also enacting “wide-ranging restrictions on economic and security assistance to Ethiopia and will bring our defense trade control policy in line with them.”
- The Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has said that it is regrettable, that the “the attempt by the U.S. administration to meddle in its internal affairs, is not only inappropriate but also completely unacceptable”, and that it “will reassess its relations with the United States”.
- It further said that it “will not be deterred by this unfortunate decision of the U.S. administration”.
- Bloomberg says U.S sanctions complicate Vodafone funding for Ethiopia telecom entry.
- Vodafone Group PLC’s plans to expand in Ethiopia have been complicated by the U.S state development agency’s decision to pause investment in the country.
- A group including the U.K.’s Vodafone, Safaricom Ltd and Vodafone Group Ltd were awarded a new mobile-phone license by the Ethiopian government and had agreed to take a \$500 million loan from the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation for acquisition and development costs.

30 Year Independence Eritrea (per 24 May)

- May 24 is independence day in Eritrea. It has been 30 years since Eritrean independence from Ethiopia and the Derg-regime. In Ethiopia Liberation day from the Derg-regime is celebrated tomorrow, 25 May.

Accusation of use of chemical weapons (per 24 May)

- The Telegraph said exclusive footage and accounts of witnesses and victims smuggled out of the war in Tigray suggests the Ethiopian and Eritrean armies may have used powerful incendiary weapons in civilian areas.
- The victims include Kisanet Gebremicheal, a 13-year-old girl from the village of Adi’ayqoro in central Tigray who suffered agonising burns when her home came under attack on 20 April 2021.
- “A heavy weapon hit the house, and fire fell from the roof,” she said on the phone. “It burned me immediately. It had the smell of gunpowder.”
- Footage taken shortly after Ms Gebremicheal made it to the medical center shows her dark skin entirely burnt away from her arms, legs, face and hands; all that is left is a white and red paste of flesh and fat.
- “Oh, my heart. Oh, what the hell is this? Oh mum,” she wails as the nurse wrap her burnt and infected body. But the morphine doesn’t work any more, so even her mother’s soft touch is agony.
- Hamish de Bretton, the former commander of the UK’s Joint Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Regiment said: “These horrific injuries look very similar to injuries I have seen on casualties in North-east and North-west Syria. It looks like injuries caused by white phosphorus.”

- Genet Asmelash, Kisanet Gebremicheal's mother, says her two daughters were working in the family home on 20 April 2021 when the heavy weapon exploded above.
- Ms Asmelash also said there was no fighting in the area, and it was daylight when the shell struck. "There was a bad smell, something that suffocates...something like a poison or a chemical. It was like a cloud, and I could not see the house."
- Yemane Weldemicheal, an 18-year-old young man, completely from a different area, a village named Adi Woluwo in eastern Tigray was also another victim. He said: "It was April 9. I was alone sitting in my house, which is made of stone and mud. A heavy weapon landed into the house suddenly."
- "It has a suffocating smell. It made a fire inside the house. I was burning immediately. Everything except my hair was burning," he added.
- Mr Woldemicheal says both Eritrean and Ethiopian soldiers were in control of the area when he was hit, and there was no ongoing fighting.
- Medical staff told the Telegraph that they have seen more child victims and that they suspect many others died of their wounds before they made it through military roadblocks to the capital, Mekelle.
- Dan Kaszeta, a chemical and biological specialist at the Royal United Services Institute, a defence think tank said: "This could easily be the result of a white phosphorus munition. It is possible that high explosive munitions caused some fires. But this seems more likely an incendiary weapon like phosphorus."
- The Ethiopian government has denied the accusation, saying that "the charge is malicious and beyond irresponsible." and accuses it of trying to divide "the nation".

Reported situation in Tigray (per 24 May)

- Broadcasted by Dimtsi Weyane (DW) International, spokesperson of the ousted Tigray regional government said: "The government of Tigray affirms the readiness on the parts of the people and government of Tigray to collaborate and execute the U.S Senate resolution 97 in an orderly manner."
- Reported in social media that the Ethiopian Airlines is using cargo planes to transport military equipment from abroad to Ethiopia. The cargo terminal was also seen overflowing with weapons.
- A massacre took place on 8 May 2021 in the village of Abune Y'ma'eta Guh. Following fighting between Tigrayan and Eritrean forces the day before, Eritrean forces came back in the morning and shot 21 of which 19 died. Two are in critical condition.
- Among the victims are seven children under ten, one of which was a 2 month old baby.
- One of the survivors also had machete wounds. She made it to Ayder Referral hospital by 15 May.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 24 May)

- The Police department of Gelana Woreda in the Guji zone said seven people including the head of the zonal security and administration office were killed in an attack.
- Commander Obsa Hundesa, head of the police department, attributed the attacks to the recently designated terrorist group 'Shene', a term used to refer to the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA).
- Five people were also seriously injured in the attack.

Reported Situation in the Horn (per 24 May)

- According to the Sudan Tribune, the UAE has withdrawn its initiative to settle the border dispute between Sudan and Ethiopia.
- The Egyptian Irrigation minister has said that it will not accept a Unilateral filling of the GERD reservoir by Ethiopia. He added that there were measures that could be taken.
- Negotiations are still at an impasse, despite the AU and US trying to resolve the dispute.

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<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-05-24/u-s-sanctions-complicate-vodafone-funding-for-ethiopia-entry>
<https://www.tghat.com/2021/05/24/a-massacre-in-abuna-yemata-guh-at-the-foot-of-the-famous-rock-hewn-church/>
<https://www.state.gov/united-states-actions-to-press-for-the-resolution-of-the-crisis-in-the-tigray-region-of-ethiopia/>
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/05/23/exclusive-ethiopians-suffer-horrific-burns-suspected-white-phosphorus/>

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 155 - 26 May 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Webinar 'Voices From Tigray: Conflict-Related Sexual Violence against Women in Tigray' (25 May 2021)

- The webinar meeting was chaired by Hon. Julia Duncan-Cassell, former Minister of Gender in Liberia. In her concluding remarks she asked all African women in leadership to step up their voice to stop the harrowing perpetration of rape as a weapon of war in Tigray.
- Hon. Julia Duncan-Cassell told the Tigray women who gave their testimony in the webinar that African women were sharing their pain and asked Africa and the world to end the violence against women.
- Hon. Julia Duncan-Cassell said President Sirleaf, AU Envoy to the Horn, was following the situation closely and closely working with US UN Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield to address it.
- Hon. Julia Duncan-Cassell closed the webinar by stating that "The perpetration of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence has not diminished and is spreading across the Horn. There must be concerted and coordinated international pressure and targeted sanctions. These atrocities must come to an end, and soldiers and their commanders must be prosecuted." She called on the following three points:
 - The withdrawal of all foreign troops from Tigray, particularly those from Eritrea;
 - The referral of the deployment by Eritrea of National Service in a foreign jurisdiction to the International Criminal Court;
 - All parties in Tigray to end with immediate effect the impunity of the use of Rape as a Weapon of War.
- [Keynote speaker, MEP Assita Kanko](#), asked the international community to respond: "Every voice matters in urging the international community to act. We cannot waste another moment in trying to stop this crime against humanity. There is more than one way to commit genocide. Indeed, the damage of rape as a weapon of war, is as powerful as any gun or bomb, as the armies and authorities seek to silence these women and their communities. We, therefore, must lend them our voices, and those voices must be determined and loud."
- Women from Tigray presented their harrowing ordeal, a third of rapes executed as gang rapes, over multiple days, in public, in front of family members including their children, their genitals burned or filled with foreign objects including burning sticks and relatives forced to perpetrate rape on Tigray women. The testimonies said that witnesses of the crimes committed and the children including babies of the rape-victims were killed in the violence.
- Selam Kidane, an Eritrean human rights advocate, told the conference that Eritrea is committing troops in Tigray that have suffered under the plight of National Service, a form of slavery, which has been qualified as a Crime against Humanity and she begged the international community to refer Eritrea to the ICC for the crimes committed by Eritrea on foreign soil in Tigray.
- Mariam Basajja presented the Africa Women for Peace in the Horn Initiative expressing that young women from the entire continent stood by the women in Tigray
- Tigray Human Rights advocate, Meaza Gidey, called the rape against women in Tigray a genocide: "Women are raped because they are Tigrayan, to cleanse the bloodline. The world has all the facts. I call on all relevant actors to listen to the cries of the innocent women of Tigray. They are not only being raped, they are also starved to death."

- Malgorzata Tarasiewicz, Director from East West Women Network based in Poland, said the international community had all the tools it needed to respond to the situation in Tigray where rape is used as a weapon of war and that it should respond without delay.

Conflict and Sanctions (as per 25 May)

- In an article on the Jamestown Foundation, a US think tank focused on military affairs and terrorism, Michael Horton has written that the conflict in Tigray has “metastasized into a grinding insurgency that could continue for years.” It has the potential to destabilise Ethiopia and the wider Horn region.
- He said that the TDF possesses the “two components most critical to conducting a guerrilla war: deep knowledge of the geographic and socio-political terrain and a sympathetic population.”
- He also said that the Ethiopian scorched earth strategy in Tigray has worsened the situation as it has ensured the “alienation of most ethnic Tigrayans” and provided more support to the TDF. The deliberate attacks on the local population by the ENDF, Eritrean Forces (EDF), and Amhara militias are further fuelling ethnic tensions.
- Eritrean forces are also unlikely to leave Tigray. There are few incentives for them to leave, and Ethiopian forces are not in a position to force the well entrenched forces out.
- Dr. Amani Al-Tawil, Director of the African Program at the Al-Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies, said US sanctions on Addis Ababa cannot be isolated from the dispute over the Ethiopian dam.

Reported situation in Tigray (per 25 May)

- The Head of Ethiopia’s army asked officials in Eritrea to withdraw all of their troops from Ethiopia. Birhanu Jula, Chief of staff of ENDF sent the letter to his counterparts in Eritrea several days ago.
- According to Reuters, Eritrean and Ethiopian soldiers forcibly detained more than 500 young men and women from four camps for displaced people in the town of Shire in the Tigray region.
- An aid worker told Reuters that: “The soldiers arrived at around 11 pm and loaded hundreds of people onto trucks, the humanitarian and the doctor said, citing witnesses’ accounts. Several men were beaten, their phones and money confiscated.”
- A man who lives in one of the camps, and hid during the incursion, said soldiers broke in and beat men with sticks. He said: “Soldiers surrounded our camp at night, broke the main gate, and started to beat every man using sticks, they hit a 70-year-old and kidnapped a blind one. Only from our camp, Tsehay elementary school, 400 (people) were taken.”
- Tewodros Aregai, interim head of Shire’s northwestern zone, told Reuters he had few details but confirmed “hundreds” had been taken.
- The Patriarch of the Orthodox Tewahdo Church of Mekele, Abune Isaias said: “I have never seen this. The crimes follow one another. Churches are destroyed. And it’s a war against the Tigrayans. They are after our story and want to kill everyone. It is genocide.”
- Abune Isaias added: “They want to destroy the Tigrayans and the Tigray. It is the federal government that attacks us and gives the orders. As a result, we were attacked from all sides.”
- “I think Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy and Eritrean President Issayas Afewerki just want to eliminate whoever will prevent them from having power. They want to become kings,” said Abune Isaias.
- Streets were empty, shops and offices were also closed in major cities across the Tigray region following three-day fasting and prayer decree starting on 25 May 2021.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 25 May)

- The European Union in Ethiopia calls for an urgent, impartial, and speedy investigation into the abduction of over 500 youth in Tigray by Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers.
- The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) admitted that lower-level government officials are interfering in polling stations and called for restraint.

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Links of interest

Link to [Webinar Voices From Tigray: Conflict-Related Sexual Violence against Women in Tigray](#)

Link to Key Note Address by Assita Kanko: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ahLzRQGrxU>

<https://jamestown.org/program/tigray-defense-forces-resist-ethiopian-army-offensive-as-sudan-eritrea-and-ethnic-militias-enter-the-fray/>

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 158 - 31 May 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Tigray (per 30 May)

- CNN said hundreds of men in the Tigray region were released following its report of their detention that prompted an international outcry.
- Eyewitnesses and aid workers told CNN that the soldiers had released all but a "handful" of the men, who were detained by Ethiopian and Eritrean forces operating in the region.
- A released detainee described physical abuse by Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers while in their custody.
- "They take us out one by one and torture us," he said. "This is the third time I've been beaten by soldiers like this. People here start running and are scared every time they see someone wearing military uniform. The world has to hear our cries and do something -- we are living in terror."
- Hunger deaths were reported to the Tigray Regional Emergency Coordination Centre from the Central and Southern district of Tigray, including people from IDP sites.
- The Regional Emergency Coordination Centre said Eritrean troops have looted rations of over 2,166 individual beneficiaries and the remaining was mixed with soil not to be used by the people.
- The Regional Emergency Coordination Centre report shows over 15 Woredas in the region were inaccessible to aid due to intentional roadblock and unwillingness of Ethiopian and Eritrean troops.
- Reported that all roads from and to Mekelle were closed on Friday. Ethiopian and Eritrean forces commanders were heard saying "because you fasted for 3 days, we will punish you for 6 days, by sealing off Mekelle."

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 30 May)

- BBC said over 10,000 people have attended an anti-US rally in Addis Ababa, to denounce President Joe Biden's policy on the conflict in Tigray.
- At the rally, people held placards criticising the US while others applauded Russia's President Vladimir Putin and China's leader Xi Jinping.
- In a letter, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia has requested the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Addis Ababa to arrange a high-level meeting for the Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen as Special Envoy of Prime Minister Abiy with Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation and his counterpart Sergey Lavrov, preferably in the first week of June 2021.
- Multiple sources reported on social media that Ethiopian Airlines has been transporting weapons from China and Lebanon to Ethiopia.
- The sources added the airline is transporting weapons and troops to/from Eritrea's Assab, Massawa and Asmara to Ethiopia's Addis Ababa, Mekelle and Bahirdar.
- The federal government has received a request for reimbursement of 2 billion Birr (€38 million) from the Amhara regional state for costs incurred for medical treatment provisions to members of the ENDF injured in the war in Tigray.
- The Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) says Eritrean troops are brutally persecuting civilians in the Abay Chomen region of West Oromia.

- OLF said Eritrean forces have been deployed to Oromia and Benshangul-Gumuz regions and are repeating the same atrocities on civilians as that of the Northern part of the country.
- “There was tangible evidence that in April 2021, many battalions of Eritrean soldiers had been deployed to Horro Guduru, Qellam Wallaga, West Wallaga, Guji and Borana Zones of Oromia and the Metekel (Benshangul-Gumuz) region and caused enormous damages to civilians including beating, killing, looting, raping of women and children and arbitrarily detaining civilians,” said OLF.
- Three Chinese nationals whose detention was claimed by the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) were reportedly released and handed over to representatives of the ICRC.

International situation (30 May 2021)

- Bloomberg says the U.S. has asked multilateral development banks to suspend funding to Ethiopia as fresh reports of human rights abuses surfaced from the war-torn Tigray region.
- Robert Godec, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs said: “There are confirmed reports of Tigrayans dying from malnutrition and starvation.” As a result, the U.S. is “withholding support for new lending from multilateral development banks that don’t address basic human needs and are asking our allies to do likewise,” he added.
- Godec also told Congress that Joe Biden's administration is conducting a review into possible war crimes committed in Ethiopia’s Tigray region.
- “We have a fact-based review underway that is being conducted very quickly and the secretary of state will have the final determination,” said Godec. Washington takes “extremely seriously” comments by UN Commissioner for Human Rights on “atrocities that may well amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity.”
- Mr Godec added if the conflict does not “reverse course,” Ethiopia and Eritrea should anticipate “further action” from the US. “It cannot be business as usual in the face of the violence and atrocities in Tigray,” said Godec during a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing.
- Sarah Charles, Assistant to the Administrator of the USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, told Congress that the situation was increasing the risk of famine in the Tigray region. “By blocking food assistance deliveries and preventing farmers from accessing their agricultural land to plant and harvest, the armed actors are actively exacerbating the risk of famine in Tigray,” said Ms Charles.
- She also told intentional attacks on humanitarian staff to block aid from arriving in the region, including the killing of a USAID partner staff member and 7 other humanitarian workers during the conflict.
- Finnish Foreign Affairs Minister, Pekka Haavisto discussed with UN SG, António Guterres on the alarming humanitarian situation in Tigray and emphasized the importance that humanitarian workers are protected and humanitarian access guaranteed.
- EEPA is holding a Webinar on Voices From Tigray Brutalities against Religious leaders, Holy Places and Heritage in Tigray on June 8th, 14:00-16:00 EAT, 13:00-15:00 CET, 07.00-09.00 USA East. The registration link is: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_w_2_EZNvQqa0luRWLdBWeQ

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 159 - 01 June 2021

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Reported situation in Tigray (per 31 May)

- Fierce fighting between Tigray forces and ENDF and Eritrean allied troops was reported in Naeder Adet and Asgede Tsimbla districts of the Central and Northwestern zone of Tigray.
- AFP said an aid worker has died after being struck by a stray bullet in the Tigray region, the ninth death of a humanitarian worker in the conflict there. The aid worker, Negasi Kidane, based in the Tigray town of Adigrat, was a longtime employee of the International Committee for the Development of Peoples, known by its Italian acronym CISP.
- Human Rights Watch (HRW) says all warring parties in the Tigray region have been implicated in the attacking, pillaging, and occupying of schools since the conflict started.
- HRW said Ethiopian forces have used the historic Atse Yohannes preparatory school in the regional capital, Mekelle, as a barracks after taking control of the city in late November 2020, and continued to use the school through mid-April 2021.
- Laetitia Bader, Horn of Africa director at HRW said: "The fighting in Tigray is depriving many children of an education and the warring factions are only making matters worse. Occupying and damaging schools ends up affecting the lives of Tigray's future generations, adding to the losses that communities in Tigray have faced for the last 6 months."
- Several Mekelle residents told HRW that in early December, Ethiopian forces began using the Atse Yohannes school as a base. After occupying the school for several weeks, they left; trucking away computers, plasma screens, and food.
- The residents added the interim authorities soon began to repair the damage so that classes could resume, but soldiers returned in February and occupied the school for another three months.
- During this time, troops posted armed sentries at the school gate and built fortifications using stones around the school grounds.
- A Mekelle resident working near the school told HRW that women enter and leave the school's guarded compound on several occasions. "I saw different women taken inside. Sometimes they would stay two, three, or five days, and we would see them go in and out of the school," she said.
- "They (women) appeared beaten and were crying as they would leave...No one could ask the women what happened to them, and the atmosphere made it difficult to do so," she added.
- HRW also said after Ethiopian forces left the school, Mekelle residents found widespread damage to classrooms and offices, and destruction of electrical installations, water pipes, and other property.
- "I have given my life and service to the school," a teacher said. "There is now nothing left to try and begin again, to resume classes. The school won't be functional even for next year, because of the damage. Everything was taken."
- Ethiopian soldiers left behind walls covered with hateful and vulgar anti-Tigrayan messages. "On the walls were phrases insulting Tigrayan people," said one parent. "It was painful to see and read, let alone repeat again."
- Several Mekelle residents and officials also said that what was most striking and painful was the hateful slogans written in Amharic on the school walls.
- A person explained the graffiti said: It was insulting to Tigray and its people: "Tigray and snakes are the same"; "Tigray must be cleansed"; "Tigray must be cleansed for the development of the country";

“insults about junta, Tigray are junta.” There were a lot of different things that were written about Tigray women that I cannot repeat. It is too painful.

- HRW further said more than 25 percent of schools in the Tigray region have been looted and damaged.
- A report by National Geographic (NG) says the only roads open in the Tigray region lead to endless tales of darkness and most roads north and south from Tigray’s capital of Mekelle have been closed to journalists and humanitarian aid.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 31 May)

- Kello Media released a secretly recorded audio clip of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed speaking at a recent Executive Committee meeting of the Prosperity Party about Ethiopia’s upcoming general election. Abiy said: “We have won the election, whether you believe it or not, we have won the election easily.”
- Abiy added: “We are all prepared for this election. There is a task force organized only for this matter and will start its work. Believe me, no one can be a leader. We now have a great responsibility to prevent an election and make sure that our competitors also lose hope in it. Compared to the challenges we have come through thus far, it should not be difficult to succeed in this endeavor.”
- He also said: “There will be a lot of bloodshed and carnage in this country. No one will be able to form a government in the coming 10 years. I would rather die than hand over power to them.”
- There is a concerted effort to manipulate public opinion on social media regarding the conflict in Tigray and the international engagement with the situation. Through sites such as unityforethiopia, dozens of tweet templates are offered that can be tweeted on social media. The tweets attack international efforts and TPLF and call for the GERD dam to be filled. These are intended for an international audience, it appears, as many of the tweets are in English.
- This comes at a time when there are many pro-Ethiopian demonstrations being organised in Addis Ababa and Western capitals. Eritrea, an ally of Ethiopia in the conflict, uses similar disinformation, demonstrations, and propaganda tactics, to push back against any international concerns raised in relation to the situation in the country.
- Jan Nyssen, a Professor at Gent University, identified several similar tactics being used for this in the war in Tigray, in the following successive order:
 - Denial: “it’s a very crazy idea”, “you are on the TPLF payroll.”
 - “Admit a small crime, say that you are doing something about it, and the world can continue closing its eyes.”
 - “This is a dirty war, all are committing crimes.”
 - “Human rights concerns is Western imperialism; Ethiopia is not for sale.”
 - “Unfortunately, this is the price to pay.”

International situation (31 May)

- The Armenian Weekly, an English language newspaper belonging to the Armenian Revolutionary Federation political party, has published an open letter to President Biden calling on the US and the western world to officially categorize the conflict in Tigray as a genocide and “use all the leverage and the existing diplomatic, economic and military machineries at its disposal” to pressure the Ethiopian government.
- The letter goes on to compare the atrocities being committed in Tigray to those that occurred during the Armenian genocide: rapes, mass killings, and forced deportations being a hallmark of both.
- The letter also says that “The genocide in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, a genocide that I have witnessed with my own eyes, could even be at a scale worse than that of the Armenians and Rwandans.”
- EEPA is holding a Webinar on Voices From Tigray Brutalities against Religious leaders, Holy Places, and Heritage in Tigray on June 8th, 14:00-16:00 EAT, 13:00-15:00 CET, 07.00-09.00 U.S East. The registration link is: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_w_2_EZNvQqa0luRWLdBWeQ

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Links of interest

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 160 - 02 June 2021

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Reported situation in Tigray (per 01 June)

- The Guardian says Eritrean soldiers killed 19 civilians in Tigray three weeks ago. Most of the victims in the alleged attack were women and young children.
- Multiple witnesses told The Guardian that the killings were perpetrated by Eritrean soldiers in a small rural settlement on steep slopes below the fifth-century stone church of Abuna Yemata on May 8.
- A document from Ayder Referral hospital in Mekelle shows that between November 4 and May 21, 503 women and young girls were seen at Ayder Referral hospital after being raped mainly by Ethiopia's and Eritrea's soldiers.
- 91 of them were under 18 years of age, among them a child under 5. 238 women and underage girls had unwanted pregnancy after having been raped.
- The United Nations said over 90% of people in the Tigray region need emergency food aid.
- The UN World Food Programme voiced alarm that the conflict had caused an increase in hunger levels which were already high in Tigray.
- "A total of 5.2 million people, equivalent to 91 percent of Tigray's population, need emergency food assistance due to the conflict," said Tomson Phiri, WFP spokesperson.
- The WFP said it had provided emergency aid to more than a million people since it started distributions in northwestern and southern areas of Tigray in March.
- "WFP is alarmed at the impact of conflict on hunger levels and we are deeply concerned at the number of people we see in need of nutrition support and emergency food assistance," said Phiri.
- Phiri added: "The WFP is calling for \$203 million to continue to scale up its response in Tigray to save lives and livelihoods through to the end of the year."
- The WFP also said the instability was undermining the efforts of humanitarian workers to reach vulnerable communities in Tigray, especially in rural areas.
- "A ceasefire and unimpeded access are vital for WFP and all its partners in Tigray to reach all areas and all people desperately in need of life-saving support," added Phiri.
- The WFP further said almost half of pregnant or breastfeeding mothers in 53 villages were either moderately or acutely malnourished, while almost a quarter of all children screened were found to be malnourished.
- UNICEF has said that it has identified over 6.000 unaccompanied children in Tigray. It also says that of the at least 1.6 Million IDPs, over 720 thousand are children.
- UNICEF says that "Adolescents boys speak of fear of recruitment and use by parties to the conflict." UNICEF and its partners also continue to report arbitrary detentions.
- UNICEF has also said that since the outbreak of the conflict in November 2020, over 540 women and girls, who are GBV and rape survivors, have received help from UNICEF programmes.
- They also say that their teams and those of partners, continue to be blocked; "Much of Tigray remains inaccessible to humanitarian workers. Since the beginning of April, at least 31 missions by mobile

health, nutrition and water teams supported by UNICEF and partners have been blocked, either due to insecurity or because they were harassed and denied passage.”

- Reported in social media that ethnic Tigrayans were denied getting new passports. Tigray state was also removed from the Ethiopian Immigration Nationality and Vital Events Agency application system.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 01 June)

- The US Embassy in Addis Ababa said the U.S has deepening concerns about the ongoing crisis in Tigray.
- The Embassy stated without an immediate cessation of hostility and a rapid expansion of humanitarian access, current and significant food insecurity could lead to famine.
- “The Secretary of State has announced a policy to prevent issuance of visas for any current or former Ethiopian or Eritrean government officials, members of the security forces, or other individuals—to include Amhara regional and irregular forces and members of the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) responsible for, or complicit in, undermining resolution of the crisis there,” said the embassy.
- The United States continues to welcome all others to apply for visas to travel to the United States for work, study and as immigrants. The Consular Section is open for business but respecting COVID-mitigation.
- The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) said election will not take place in four constituencies in the Benshangul-Gumuz region. A list of 40 constituencies in 6 regions where election will not take place as per schedule was also issued by the NEBE.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (per 01 June)

- Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has disclosed that Ethiopia is planning to build over a hundred dams across the country. He made the comments while launching an expressway to increase trade relations with Djibouti.
- The Egyptian Foreign minister has decried the announcement saying that there has been no proper consultation with countries that might be affected.
- Egypt has also announced that it will use its share at the IMF to help settle part of Sudan’s debt.

International situation (per 01 June)

- The French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs said they are deeply concerned about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Tigray region.
- The Ministry added the existing food crisis will be exacerbated if farmers can’t plant now. France joins the international call for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire. Unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid depends on it.
- U.S Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa Jeffrey Feltman is traveling to Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kenya from May 31 to June 6.
- Feltman meets senior officials of the four countries to discuss cooperative approaches to supporting a stable and prosperous Horn of Africa, including a resolution of the dispute over the GERD that is acceptable to all parties.
- EEPA is holding a Webinar on Voices From Tigray Brutalities against Religious leaders, Holy Places, and Heritage in Tigray on June 8th, 14:00-16:00 EAT, 13:00-15:00 CET, 07.00-09.00 U.S East. The registration link is: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_w_2_EZNvQqa0luRWLdBWeQ

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 161 - 03 June 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Tigray (per 01 June)

- OCHA says the overall security situation in the Tigray region remains highly complex and fluid. Ongoing hostilities are highly mobile, mostly in rural areas, hindering humanitarian operations.
- "While hostilities have largely ceased in boundary areas with Eritrea, from North-western to Eastern Zones, since March, access to these areas is often denied," said OCHA.
- OCHA also said violence and attacks against civilians, including humanitarian workers, continue.
- "Level of food insecurity and malnutrition remain alarming. 21% of more than 21,000 children under age 5 screened for malnutrition last week were identified with severe wasting, alarmingly above the emergency 15% threshold set by the WHO," added OCHA.
- OCHA further said health facilities continue to receive and treat survivors of GBV throughout the region, with 1,288 official cases reported between February and April. The reported numbers greatly underestimate the actual cases, as underreporting is widespread.
- There have been reports that two Eritrean divisions, 16th and 57th, on their way to Adwa.
- Reported that hundreds of Eritrean soldiers have been deployed to the town of Abi Adi on 02 June.
- In a recent update on the situation in Tigray, UNHCR has said that 8.100 Eritrean refugees have arrived from Shimelba and Hitsats refugee camps. They are continuing to find remaining refugees, who were displaced from both camps after the camps were attacked and then closed.
- They say that many refugees are still dispersed around Shiraro, Adigrat and "hard to reach" areas across the Tigray region. Two thousand unidentified refugees are thought to be in Shiraro. Meanwhile other refugees are likely heading out of Tigray to areas perceived as safer, such as Addis Ababa.
- Shimelba and Hitsats refugee camps housed 25 thousand refugees before the conflict started.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (per 01 June)

- The Sudanese Foreign minister has written a letter in which they say that a new round of negotiations, headed by the United Nations, African Union, European Union, and United States were needed to break the deadlock regarding the GERD negotiations.

International situation (per 01 June)

- Eritrean Amb to the UN, Sophia Tesfamariam, will be Chair to the African group to the UN for June 2021. Tesfamariam is known to be the right hand to Eritrean President Isayas Afewerki.
- The new Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of Human Rights in Eritrea has been published.
- The report says that Eritrean forces indiscriminately bombarded Humera at the beginning of the conflict, killing 46 people and wounding 200 more.
- The report further says that when Eritrean troops took control of Adigrat on 20 November, the troops "committed extrajudicial executions of civilians and widespread sexual and gender-based violence and looting, and transported the looted goods to Eritrea on stolen trucks."
- The Special Rapporteur also reported that the office received reports of Somali troops being transported by Eritrea to the frontline in Tigray.
- The Special Rapporteur is also raising "serious concern" about the situation of Eritrean refugees in Tigray. In particular, the Rapporteur is concerned about "alleged participation of Eritrean troops in the

Tigray conflict alongside the ENDF, and allegations of their possible implication in cases of serious human rights violations, including abductions, extrajudicial killings and executions of civilians, widespread looting and pillage, the forced return of Eritrean refugees and asylum seekers, and their imprisonment in unknown locations in Eritrea.”

- The report raises serious concerns about the humanitarian situation of these refugees saying that “During a visit to southern Tigray, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees heard horror stories of survivors’ experiences at the hands of Eritrean troops.”
- It concludes that “The situation of human rights in Eritrea remains a source of serious concern.”
- In particular it calls on the international community, including governments and civil society to:
 - Thoroughly investigate allegations of serious human rights violations, including abductions, extrajudicial killings and executions of civilians, widespread looting and pillage, and the forced return of Eritrean refugees and asylum seekers;
 - Exert international pressure on the Government of Eritrea to end the two-decade practice of arbitrary and incommunicado detention, of political opponents, prisoners of conscience and others detained because of their faith.
 - “Adopt similar initiatives to the European Union’s global human rights sanctions regime to target and impose restrictive measures on individuals, entities and bodies –including State and non-State actors –responsible for, involved in or associated with serious violations of human rights and humanitarian law in Eritrea, including acts of torture, extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and killings;
 - Avoid financing projects that may potentially violate or have an adverse impact on the human rights of the Eritrean people, and put in place mechanisms to adequately monitor respect for the basic rights of those employed in projects implemented, ensuring that the labour force participates on a voluntary basis and that workers receive adequate financial compensation.
- Voice of America (VOA) is accused of Ethiopian government propaganda by a dozen of their staffers.
- They say that large sections of the upper management are aware of it, as concerns have been raised with them about bias in the conflict, but that little has been done to remedy it.
- Some of the journalists working in VOA have quit after the network failed to properly highlight atrocities carried out by Ethiopian forces and their allies.
- They also mention that VOA extensively covered the Mai Kadra massacre in November 2020, even sending a crew, but has barely mentioned the similar massacre that took place in Axum.
- Since 2018, the Amharic section of the network has been under stringent management, which has stopped story ideas deemed damaging for the Ethiopian government, such as the Axum massacre.
- VOA has responded by saying that “VOA does its best to cover the situation in Ethiopia fairly and accurately. There are strong feelings in the region about the conflict, and we hear from partisans of all sides. Our goal is objective journalism.”
- France, the Netherlands, Germany, the UK, the United States, and other European countries have called for a ceasefire in Tigray to prevent a famine and to allow humanitarian access to the region.
- Finish Foreign Minister and EU envoy to the Horn, Pekka Haavisto, spoke with UN Director General Guterres about the “alarming Humanitarian situation”. Both called for humanitarian access to the region and protection of humanitarian workers.
- Belgium reiterates deep concern regarding the worsening humanitarian situation in Tigray, Ethiopia.
- EEPA is holding a Webinar on Voices From Tigray Brutalities against Religious leaders, Holy Places, and Heritage in Tigray on June 8th, 14:00-16:00 EAT, 13:00-15:00 CET, 07.00-09.00 U.S East. The registration link is: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_w_2_EZNvQqa0luRWLdBWeQ

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 162 - 04 June 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Tigray (per 03 June)

- The two divisions that left Tigray yesterday are only reportedly part of a rotation of troops. More Eritrean troops are being deployed in Eastern and Central Zones of Tigray. There are estimated 100-150 buses full of Eritrean soldiers crossing Zelambessa and Rama towards Tigray, to be deployed in Eastern and Central Tigray.
- A source told the Catholic charity, Aid to the Church in Need, that soldiers from neighboring Eritrea are continuing to slaughter and rape civilians.
- Widespread sexual violence, including against nuns, is part of a genocidal campaign against Tigrayans.
- The source said ““This is clearly genocide against the people of Tigray. This is not just fighting; they are killing everybody – that is a sign of genocide.”“They are deliberately targeting the young. Young people are killed, our ladies and women are abused with sexual harassment – that is a sign of genocide itself.”
- He further elaborated on the sexual violence against women, saying that they were being subjected to “different kind of abuse, like you’ve never heard before,”. The situation is worsened by the fact that the few places that are in a position to help these women, such as hospitals, are often near Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers.
- OCHA said over 5.4000 unaccompanied children have been identified in the Tigray region.
- 2.8 million of the 5 million people had been reached since late March. OCHA estimates that 5.2 million people are in need of food assistance across Tigray.
- 1,715,176 people were found to be displaced in Tigray and Sudan.
- OCHA and its partners in the region are operating 55 Mobile Health and Nutrition Teams (MHNT) in 57 Woredas. Up from 40 MHNT in 34 Woredas in mid May.
- One of the gaps that OCHA identifies in the water supply is a “military presence around water sources in Mekelle (Enda-Gebriel) and occupation of water offices in Adi-shehu and Hagere Selam in Southeastern and Central Zones of Tigray.”

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 03 June)

- The Ethiopian government said the counter-attack operations against the TPLF will be expected to be finalized soon.
- According to Addis Fortune Ethiopian authorities believe their country is under an orchestrated attack that is “condescending in nature, often patronizing in tone, belligerent in approach and destructive in the outcome.”
- Billene Seyoum, the spokesperson of the Prime Minister, said that there is a concoction of figures and stories about developments unfolding in the Tigray region that is designed to push a particular global narrative “which does not serve the people of Tigray.”
- Billene said: “The Ethiopian government is facilitating the withdrawal of Eritrean troops from Tigray and the withdrawal has already commenced.” Many has doubted the statement and said recent movement of troops in Tigray are routine rotations not withdrawal.

- It is a statement in sharp contrast given a day earlier by Dina Mufti, spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who said Eritrean troops would leave when they do. "Hopefully, they will leave one day," said Dina during his weekly media briefing.
- The head of the Ethiopian Attorney General, Gideon Timothewos said the calls the world is echoing have little to do with the wellbeing of the Tigray region. They are instead driven by "other vested interests...fabrications are spun for fundraising and relevance."
- Officials are saying that "insecurity and logistical" challenges make voting "impossible" in 26 constituencies across Ethiopia during the upcoming June 21 elections.
- Rising tensions between different ethnicities has led to more violence and hundreds of deaths in recent months. A hundred people were killed in Ataye, Amhara, in April.
- Similarly incidents of violence have been increasing in Oromo and there have been reported tensions in Ethiopian Somaliland as well.
- According to France24 the violence is also leading to political "apathy". One person told the organisation that "Why would we vote in elections? We have no interest in elections, We've lost our homes."
- Birtukan Mideksa, the chairwoman of the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE), has told a court that the board has started the process of registering the jailed members of the opposition party for candidacy.
- There are rumours that the newly appointed Ethiopian Ambassador to Eritrea (appointed on 3 March), Mihretab Mulugeta, is having difficulties getting accredited in Asmara. A similar problem was encountered by his predecessor, who had to wait a year, before being able to present his credentials.

International situation (per 03 June)

- The EU and the US are planning a meeting on the situation in Ethiopia before a G7 conversation on the crisis. The meeting will be livestreamed.
- A draft note seen by Devex lays out two objectives:
 - To mobilize consensus among U.S. allies on the enormity of the humanitarian and human rights emergency in Tigray.
 - To galvanize bolder action within the UN system for a relief response commensurate with the scope and scale of the crisis.
- Mark Lowcock, U.N. humanitarian chief, is expected to brief the United Nations Security Council.
- The US embassy in Addis Ababa has said that the U.S. joined "humanitarian partners to meet with Ethiopian officials for an update on Tigray. International partners have contributed more than \$500m to Tigray. "They "continue to call on all parties to cease hostilities, allow full and safe humanitarian access, and allow journalists to do their jobs."
- President Kenyatta of Kenya is due to meet Special Horn Envoy Feltman on Friday.
- EEPA is holding a Webinar on Voices From Tigray Brutalities against Religious leaders, Holy Places, and Heritage in Tigray on June 8th, 14:00-16:00 EAT, 13:00-15:00 CET, 07.00-09.00 U.S East. The registration link is: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_w_2_EZNvQqa0luRWLdBWeQ

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 163 - 07 June 2021

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Reported situation in Tigray (per 06 June)

- There are rumors that 40 tons of Phosphorus chemicals have arrived in Mekelle Airport on 06 June 2021 based on internal sources. This appears part of the preparation for what is called the “final” war.
- Reported that the Ethiopian government was sending reinforcements and heavy artillery to Tigray.
- The ENDF and allied forces have blocked the road to Wejirat Woreda, Southeast of Tigray, to aid workers who are trying to provide life-saving food aid to the residents.
- Multiple sources indicate fresh deployment of Eritrean forces to the Tigray region and vast rotations of both Eritrean and ENDF soldiers.
- Eritrean defense forces conducted a meeting with the residents of Wukromaray, Central Zone of Tigray on 02 June 2021. They informed residents that they are to be administered by Eritrea from now onwards. A similar meeting was held in Selekleka town and a similar issue was announced.
- Reported that Eritrean troops have looted beehives and modern agricultural equipment from the town of Selekleka near Shire, Western Tigray.
- The interim government of Tigray appointed head of the Bureau of Agriculture says Eritrean troops have ordered farmers not to leave their house and not plough their farmland.
- “Eritrean troops slaughtered and ate all farm animals and burned all the feed. They also destroyed fruits like Papaya so that farmers will have nothing to eat,” said Abadi Girmay, head of the bureau.
- He also said: “The Eritrean troops took all the farmers' food and crops as much as they could carry and added water to the leftover to make it unusable. They have also burned down farm equipments.”
- A report by the Regional Emergency Coordination Center said Ethiopian and Eritrean troops have been looting beneficiaries' rations without reservation. Ethiopian troops have also looted two trucks of The Relief Society Tigray (REST), a non-governmental organization, from the town of Hawzen.
- The Regional Emergency Coordination Center added that humanitarian workers have been arrested by ENDF allied forces on different occasions. And 16 Woredas are inaccessible due to blockades by Ethiopian and Eritrean troops.
- The report further said buster pump stations, water utility offices and water trucking operations in many towns of Tigray are still occupied and used as military bases by Eritrean and Ethiopian troops.
- Al Jazeera report says in the fight between ENDF allied forces and Tigray defense forces, civilians, and especially children are suffering.
- The report said more and more children are caught up in shelling in Hawzen and other nearby areas, with at least 32 admitted to the Ayder hospital in Mekelle for blast injuries from December to April.
- The report added that thirteen had limbs amputated.
- Haftom Gebru, a 12-year-old boy from Hawzen, was wounded by shrapnel in the fighting during Orthodox Easter. An artillery shell hit a pile of stones in the family compound that then ricocheted in the boy's direction. “I am so sad I can't explain it,” said his father. “I feel it deeply.”
- Another 17-year-old, Haftom Gebretsadik from Freweini near Hawzen, was also wounded by an artillery round that struck his home in March. “I am very worried,” he said. “How can I work?”
- In an interview with TMH (Tigrai Media House), a captive ENDF soldier says the Ethiopian and Eritrean troops are killing civilians and committing other atrocities in Tigray.

- He said ENDF is dominated by ethnic Amhara soldiers and those from Oromia, Southern Nation, Nationalities and People (SNNPR), Gambella, Somali, and Afar were used as cannon fodder.
- “Ethnic Oromo members of the ENDF were seen in suspicion. And ethnic Amhara military commanders were misleading the ENDF soldiers by giving wrong information about Tigray forces,” he added.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 06 June)

- The Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) says the Eritrean army is terrorising and brutally persecuting civilians in the Borena Zone of Oromia regional state.
- “According to the information received from local residents, the Eritrean and Ethiopian forces are carrying out brutal atrocities on civilians in three Woredas of the Borena zone including Liban, Gumii Eldallo, and Negelle towns,” said the OLF.
- The OLF said on 04 June 2021, a large number of Eritrean soldiers in Ethiopian defense force uniform arrived by helicopters in the Liban district of Borena and invaded the city and surrounding areas.
- “Immediately after they arrived, these foreign troops started harassing herders and other civilians in the region and also deployed to other nearby cities of Eldello and Negelle Borena for the same atrocities,” said the OLF.
- The OLF added that the Eritrean troops were confiscating mobile phones, cash and looting private belongings from local civilians.

International situation (per 06 June)

- The U.N humanitarian chief says famine is imminent in the Tigray region, warning there is a risk that hundreds of thousands of people or more will die.
- Mark Lowcock said the economy has been destroyed along with businesses, crops, and farms and there are no banking or telecommunications services. “We are hearing of starvation-related deaths,” he said.
- “People need to wake up,” Lowcock said. “The international community needs to really step up, including through the provision of money.”
- Lowcock also said: “There are now hundreds of thousands of people in Tigray in famine conditions. That’s the worst famine problem the world has seen for a decade since a quarter of a million Somalis lost their lives in the famine there in 2011. This now has horrible echoes of the colossal tragedy in Ethiopia in 1984.”
- He further said there are more than a million people in places controlled by Tigrayan opposition forces and “there have been deliberate, repeated, sustained attempts to prevent them getting food.”
- “There are places controlled by the Eritreans and other places controlled by militia groups where it is extremely difficult to deliver aid,” he added.
- InterAction urges the UNSC and all member states to call for an immediate halt to International Humanitarian Law violations by all parties to the conflict in Tigray and to push for immediate and unhindered humanitarian access to the populations most in need.
- InterAction said the findings and recommendations of the ongoing investigations into civilian harm and human rights abuses—including sexual and gender-based violence—need to be urgently shared with the public to allow for independent review.
- InterAction also urged the UNSC to hold an open session on the deteriorating crisis in Tigray.
- A Letter sent by Lord Alton and Fiona Bruce MP, co-chairs of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Eritrea, to the chairs of the House of Commons International Development Committee and Foreign Affairs Committee, calls for the launching of a full joint inquiry into Tigray.
- EEPA is holding a Webinar on Voices From Tigray Brutalities against Religious leaders, Holy Places, and Heritage in Tigray on June 8th, 14:00-16:00 EAT, 13:00-15:00 CET, 07.00-09.00 U.S East. The registration link is: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_w_2_EZNvQqa0luRWLdBWeQ

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 164 - 08 June 2021

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Reported situation in Tigray (per 07 June)

- Reuters has published an in-depth piece on the massacre that took place in Mai Kadra at the start of the conflict. They interviewed over 120 people and cross-checked those accounts with 44 unpublished testimonies. The massacre happened in mid-November 2020.
- There have been accusations that a Tigrayan captain, identified as Capt. Kassaye Mehar, directed youths initially, from four Amhara witnesses. Reuters sent questions to Capt. Kassaye via the TPLF. TPLF spokesman Getachew Reda said that Kassaye is not known and denied that the TPLF targeted Amhara civilians in Mai Kadra.
- Subsequently, following that, Amhara started “revenge killings”, and targeted ethnic Tigrayans in retribution. Amhara forces also forced Tigrayans out of their homes and seized Tigrayan homes and the surrounding farmland.
- At least 767 people were killed in Mai Kadra, Western Tigray.
- Reuters also reported seeing “fleets of mini-buses packed with household goods and mattresses strapped to the roofs traveling from Amhara into western Tigray. New Amhara settlers were among the passengers.”
- Amhara officials and representatives have said that they have taken control of Western-Tigray, and plan to resettle up to “half a million Amhara’s” there. The spokesman of the Amhara regional government said “There is no space called western Tigray because this area is part of the Amhara region.”
- On 7 November 2020, Amhara militias reached a town named Division 75km south of Mai Kadra. There they set fire to houses and told people to get out if they wanted to live.
- By the 9th tensions were running high in Mai Kadra after the fighting had been coming closer. One Amhara said that he saw many young Tigrayans walking around with knives and machetes and checking people’s identification documents. Shortly after, Tigrayan mobs started attacking Amhara living in the city, targeting mostly men.
- Seven Amhara residents said that members of the town militia were with the mobs and appeared to be directing some of the killings. Militiamen and local police were also blocking roads leading in and out of Amhara neighbourhoods, shooting at people trying to escape.
- The ENDF and other forces entered the city uncontested on the morning of the 10th. Tigrayan fighters had by then fled the town. Attacks on Tigrayans in the city started that afternoon.
- Amhara militiamen then systematically started driving Tigrayans out of Western Amhara. Entire villages have been destroyed, cities and highways have been renamed.
- Many Tigrayans have also been executed. Amhara soldiers rounded up men, put them on trucks, and brought them to Tekeze river, where they were executed.
- There were instances of both Amhara and Tigrayans helping each other escape while the massacres were taking place.
- The acting Tigrayan Head of the city Education Office has said that all schools are due to reopen.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 07 June)

- Prime Minister Abiy said Ethiopia is facing challenges from traitors from within as well as outsiders.

- At an inaugural ceremony of the Tana Beles Sugar factory, the PM said: “Two enemies of the country’s prosperity” were identified.
- He made a reference to ‘traitors’ during the Ethio-Italian war while talking about those he accused of betraying the nation.
- He also talked about outsiders who are working to inhibit Ethiopia from standing on its feet. “Ethiopians should prioritize getting rid of traitors.” the PM said, explaining how getting rid of traitors would lessen attacks from outside.
- He further spoke about the importance of GERD. “The construction of the GERD plays an invaluable role to both Egypt and Sudan,” he said, adding “They too will benefit from it when we complete it.”
- The PM’s remarks came two weeks after the U.S announced visa restrictions for Ethiopian and Eritrean officials who are responsible for or complicit in, undermining resolution of the crisis in Tigray.

International situation (per 07 June)

- G. Meeks and M. McCaul, Chairman and Ranking Member of the U.S House Foreign Affairs Committee, along with K. Bass and C. H. Smith, Chairwoman and Ranking Member of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health and Global Human Rights said in a statement that: “We condemn, in the strongest terms, the continued fighting and atrocities ongoing in Tigray and the increasing violence and human rights abuses occurring throughout Ethiopia.”
- The statement added that the conflict in Tigray has devastated local communities, displaced more than a million people, pushed over five million people into near-famine conditions, and destabilized the broader Horn of Africa region.
- “The continuation of this violence is unacceptable and humanitarian workers must be provided safe, unfettered access to the region to provide emergency assistance to vulnerable communities,” said the statement.
- The government of Ethiopia has denied that Chemical Weapons have been used.
- The U.K government said: “We are working to establish the facts. Access to the affected areas, and to verified information, remains difficult. We have consistently called for access for independent human rights investigators and will continue to do so.”
- U.S Senator Patrick Leahy says the people of Tigray are being subjected to human rights atrocities on an appalling scale, and they are being denied urgently needed humanitarian aid – aid that is being blocked by the Ethiopian and Eritrean militaries as well as other armed groups.
- Leahy said despite significant diplomatic efforts by the U.S and others, the parties to the conflict in Tigray have taken no meaningful steps to end hostilities or seek a peaceful resolution of the conflict.
- He added that the Eritrean government should live up to its public commitment and immediately return its troops to Eritrean territory.
- “The terrible reality today is that famine, crimes against humanity, and genocide are occurring in Tigray, and they are occurring for one reason: the complicity of government officials in Addis and in Asmara,” he said.
- He also called for an end to the atrocities, the blockades of food and other humanitarian aid, a dialogue to resolve the conflict peacefully, and justice for civilians victims of atrocities.
- The Archbishop of the Coptic Church based in the UK, his **eminence Archbishop Angaelou** will open the Webinar on Voices From Tigray Brutalities against Religious leaders, Holy Places, and Heritage in Tigray on June 8th, 14:00-16:00 EAT, 13:00-15:00 CET, 07.00-09.00 U.S East. The registration link is: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_w_2_EZNvQqa0luRWLdBWeQ

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<https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/2021/6/meeks-mccaul-bass-smith-introduce-resolution-condemning-violence-and-human-rights-abuses-in-ethiopia>
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<https://www.leahy.senate.gov/press/statement-on-the-situation-in-tigray-ethiopia>
<https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/ethiopia-conflict-expulsions/>
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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 165 - 10 June 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of universities, research organizations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Webinar “Voices from Tigray” (8 June 2021)

- His Eminence Archbishop Angaelou opened at the webinar “Voices of Tigray”: “We must speak together. We must recognise the humanitarian challenge at the moment. I very much hope that this is all fake news. I hope that all of these videos are contrived. I hope there is no truth to any of this. But the overwhelming proof is that this is not the case.”
- The archbishop stated: “To hear from many voices of the destruction of churches is incredibly painful. Because these churches have been there for centuries. The churches have always been a safe place, a place of refuge, a place of pilgrimage. They are a part of people’s life and witness and faith. Even more distressing is the attack on heritage, that is encapsulated by these places, places of spirituality and worship, the heritage of benevolence, the heritage of family. The things that the world seeks now. It is the actual being of people, at the core of their identity and who they are. The attack on religious leaders is very distressing as they are pillars of faith and an example of lived faith in the world.”
- The Opening Address by his Eminence Archbishop Angaelos is available here: <https://youtu.be/W3CQNmbdy-Q>
- Helen Berhane, a former prisoner of conscience for her religious beliefs, opened the testimonies in the Webinar “Voices from Tigray”. She said: “What has been done secretly in Eritrea for decades, is now done in another country.”
- All testimonies presented to the conference are available here: https://www.eepa.be/?page_id=5111

Reported situation in Tigray (per 09 June)

- Tigrayans interviewed by the BBC say that they have no food and are starving. They said that their crops and cattle had been taken by armed men, and that the few remains of food they managed to keep are now gone. “Now we don't have anything”.
- They also told the BBC that no one is giving them aid. According to a local official, no federal assistance was being provided, and “limited assistance was coming through for neighbouring Amhara.”
- They also said that they cannot flee, as all the roads are blocked. If you want to pass, you need to offer soldiers substantial bribes. Most people however don't have any possessions left.
- Voice of America (VOA) says about 200 people are believed to be buried in and around the town of Hawzen, Eastern Tigray after more than seven months of the war. Some of them have been buried in mass graves.
- Locals told VOA that there are about 20 graves in all, containing bodies that were found in the streets after multiple battles, the most recent of which happened just a few weeks ago.
- Letay Girmay, 50, says she helped bury bodies and hopes they can soon be moved to a churchyard.
- “The bodies lay ... on the ground for 7 or 8 days,” she said. “And there was no one to help us take them to the church, so a few of us buried them. They smelled bad, rotting and attracting maggots.”
- A broadcast by Dimtsi Weyane (DW) International says the ousted government of Tigray is ready to organize, coordinate and ensure timely delivery of humanitarian assistance to the people of Tigray.

- Parents and teachers in Tigray have said that schools have not yet reopened. This comes after the interim administration announced that all schools would reopen.
- The chairman of the committee set up to provide salaries to teachers said that the 1700 private school teachers in Mekelle have yet to start giving classes again.
- Teachers were reportedly ordered to start giving classes again. However they want some conditions to be met before they start. This includes months of backpay, the fate of IDPs taking shelter in schools, and psychological aid to the children that need it.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 09 June)

- In an open letter to the US, the Oromo Global Forum asked for US action in Oromia. The OGF is an alliance of “45 Oromo civic, professional, faith-based organizations, and scholars”.
- They want to bring to the attention of the US administration the “invasion of Oromia by Eritrean soldiers, in a serious escalation of the civil war in Ethiopia by Abiy’s government.”
- They say that more than 30 thousand Eritrean and Amhara troops have been deployed to Oromia. According to the letter, those Eritrean soldiers are also starting to commit atrocities in Oromia.
- The letter continues by laying out the fear that Oromia will suffer the same fate as Tigray, putting millions of people in misery and at risk of starvation.
- The UNHCR has said that it is concerned about reports of refugees being returned against their will to Ethiopia from Djibouti.
- Clementine Nkweta-Salami, UNHCR’s Regional Director said that “Djibouti has been an exemplary host to refugees in many ways, so it is disappointing to learn of these developments. We call upon the Djibouti authorities to uphold their international obligations in relation to asylum.”

Reported Situation in the Horn region(per 09 June)

- Sudan Tribune (ST) says the Ethiopian army has deployed extra troops along their common border with Sudan in the Amhara region as militiamen continue to attack Sudanese farmers.
- ST added the recent troop build-up of forces on the Ethiopian side of the border took place in adjacent areas to Taya, Um Dablo, and Wad Alagouz, and Haskanit areas as well as Qatrand settlement.

International situation (per 09 June)

- The EU and the US will be holding a high-level virtual meeting regarding the conflict in Tigray on 10 June. The meeting intends to highlight the humanitarian emergency unfolding in the region, and will be live-streamed. It can be accessed [here](#).
- It will include remarks by US UN ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, as well as the US envoy to the region, and two EU commissioners. UN humanitarian chief Mark Lowcock will also be attending.
- According to a Senior US diplomat, PM Abiy Ahmed has asked veteran diplomat Amb Tekeda Alemu to take a delegation to Washington to ease diplomatic tensions between Ethiopia and the U.S.
- The Eritrean minister of Foreign affairs has blamed American intervention for the continuation of the conflict in Tigray.
- The Italian Embassy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia said Italy adheres to the international appeal for a humanitarian ceasefire in Tigray. The Embassy added that the civilian population must be protected, agricultural activities must be facilitated and humanitarian access must be allowed to ensure food security to all Ethiopian people.

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Links of interest

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Special Report EEPA HORN No. 166 - 11 June 2021

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EU-US high level meeting

- The European Commission and the United States held a “virtual high level meeting” in which several panelists discussed the crisis in Tigray in anticipation of the G7 meeting on Friday 11th-13th June.
- In attendance were the US ambassador to the UN, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, who provided the opening remarks, US Special envoy to the Horn, Jeff Feltman, EU Commissioner for Crisis Management Janez Lenarčič, EU Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen, USAID administrator Samantha Power, UN Humanitarian Chief Mark Lowcock, SecGen Norwegian Refugee Council Jan Egeland, UN Special representative on Sexual Violence in conflict Pramila Patten.
- In her opening speech, Thomas-Greenfield said that the UNSC failure to act on the unfolding crisis in Tigray is unacceptable. She said that thousands of people have been killed, raped, and tortured, and it is time for the UNSC to have a vision on what is happening and to respond with a sense of responsibility. Lowcock shared his frustration of UNSC inaction, even after repeated briefings and whitepapers warning of the dire and worsening situation in Tigray.
- Lowcock also spoke about the recently published IPC report, which paints a picture of an extreme situation. He said that “there is famine now”. The famine situation in Tigray is worse than anywhere in the world since the famine in Somalia in 2011.
- Those feelings were echoed by Lenarčič, who said that using starvation as a weapon of war was in contravention of humanitarian law. He also said that while the EU will continue to provide humanitarian support, it is not satisfactory and that it has not been enough for many months already.
- Mark Lowcock shared his frustration that the UNSC was not doing anything regarding the conflict. Although he briefed the Council three times already, and has sent multiple whitepapers on the impending starvation crisis in Ethiopia, the UNSC has not yet held a meeting on the subject.
- All the participants emphasised the importance of the G7 and the leading role it can play in shaping international action on Tigray. Action needs to be taken right away, and the worst can still be avoided.
- Participants also warned of the destabilising effects the conflict could have on the broader region. In Ethiopia, several regions are facing heightened levels of violence and food insecurity. Somalia and South Sudan are also facing crises. They warn that the international community needs to act on all these crises. They also note that the conflict in Ethiopia has the potential to destabilise progress made in other neighbouring countries such as Sudan.
- Panelists also said that humanitarian organisations have a critical shortage of funds and resources, and that more money is needed to scale up operations in Tigray.
- Panelists also reiterated the need for a famine prevention ceasefire to provide food to hundreds of thousands of people and unfettered humanitarian access to the region.

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Links of interest

<https://webcast.ec.europa.eu/us-aid>

http://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Ethiopia_Acute_Food_Insecurity_2020Oct2021Sept_Report.pdf

Situation Report EXTRA - EEPA HORN No. 167 - 13 June 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of universities, research organizations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Chemical weapons and heavy artillery sent into Tigray for 'final' offensive (per 12 June)

- Three independent reports confirm that chemical weapons arrived in Mekelle. According to new information received tonight from a new source, 42 tons of chemical weapons have arrived on Mekelle through Djibouti.
- The chemical weapons arrived in Mekelle from Addis Abeba on flight ET3160 ETAUQ on June 5, B789 departing from Addis Abeba at 08:22. The plane is reported to have delivered a phosphorus chemical. The carrying capacity of the plane is 51 tons.
- Situation Report published in SR 163 that: "40 tons of Phosphorus chemicals have arrived in Mekelle Airport on 06 June 2021 based on internal sources. This appears part of the preparation for what is called the "final" war." It is reported that drones may be used to deploy the chemical weapons.
- Also, heavy artillery has arrived in Djibouti with Ethiopia as the destination. The artillery and chemical weapons would have been possibly purchased in Russia, Ukraine, and China.
- It is reported that many airplanes are circling tonight over the city of Mekelle.
- Sources in Tigray report that over 130 military vehicles passed through the town of Wukro in the direction of Adigrat, to prepare for the next offensive. Rumors say that this 'last' offensive will be "very heavy". This was reported on 12 June 2021.
- [Assena TV](#) reported that ENDF moved heavy artillery from various directions into Tigray on Friday 11 June 2021 for the 'final' offensive. More than 271 buses full of Fano Amhara forces and ENDF entered to Shire and Axum via Endabaguna.
- Assena TV further reported that 180 military vehicles of ENDF moved to Mekelle from around Tembien and went to the direction of Wukro. 14 of them were carrying heavy artillery.
- The 180 vehicles went towards Maymekden and Wukro direction to deceive the public and later returned to Mekelle via Qwha. Another ENDF force moved from Hawzen to Mekelle and in replacement other ENDF forces were sent to Hawzen.
- Another ENDF force has entered Tigray with 18 orals/vehicles and now they are in Agula camp after traveling from Negelle Borona zone of the Oromia region.

Heavy Eritrean Deployment in Oromia (per 12 June)

- According to the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), there was heavy fighting between Eritrean forces and the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) in the West Shewa Zone of Gindebarat district on 11 June 2021.
- The report said: "Our information from tangible sources shows that more than two divisions of Eritrean armies estimated to 30,000 Eritrean soldiers had been recently deployed to Oromia and Benishangul-Gumuz via different directions."
- The OLF also said the new large-scale deployment of Eritrean soldiers in the Oromia and Benishangul-Gumuz regions is proving a devastating level of conflict and state failure.
- OLF added despite continuous diplomatic engagements of the international community and serious concerns of genuine political parties and fear of Ethiopian peoples, the Eritrean regime has continued deploying its troops in various parts of the country.
- "Since the beginning of April 2021, heavily armed Battalions of Eritrean soldiers together with Amhara militias and ENDF had been deployed to Oromia zones of Borana, Gujii, Wollo, Horo Guduru, Qellam

Wallaga, West Wallaga, Shashamane, and Metekel Zones for military operation in various parts of Oromia and Benishangul Gumuz regions,” said OLF.

International situation (per 12 June)

- The [UN warned](#) that tens of thousands of children are at risk of dying from famine in the Tigray region.
- UNICEF spokesperson James Elder said: “Without humanitarian access to increase our aid, some 30,000 severely malnourished children in these extremely inaccessible areas are at great risk of dying.”
- The Ethiopian government has sent a group of Ethiopian women ministers to several European countries among them Portugal to counter the information that there is widespread conflict-related sexual violence against women in Tigray.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 168 - 14 June 2021

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Reported situation in Tigray (per 13 June)

- Reported that Ethiopian and Eritrean forces have bombed Menji and Guyya villages near the town of Abi-Adi Tembien, using cluster bombs and white Phosphorus, a chemical weapon.
- The attack killed at least 2 children and a mother, 13 civilians and 34 domestic animals.
- Telecommunication services are cut, now and victims of the attack have started to arrive at health facilities in Mekelle, was confirmed by a doctor of Ayder hospital.
- The Telegraph previously reported on horrific attacks with white phosphorus leaving victims gravely burned.
- Fierce fighting was reported between Tigray defense forces and ENDF allied forces in the Central and Eastern zones of Tigray.
- Reported that Eritrean defense forces have left the towns of Adi Daero, Adi Hageray and Adi Goshu in North western Tigray.
- They are relocating to Mayhanse, Hitsats, Edaga Hibret and Asgede Tsimbla areas. This looks to be a major rearrangement for a new offensive.
- Hayalu Godefay, chairperson of a Tigray opposition party, Salsay Weyane Tigray has joined Tigray Defense Forces.
- Reportedly IDPs sheltering on the campuses of Axum and Shire Universities have been told to evacuate. They have not been given a reason.
- Pictures circulate on social media showing storage of chemicals (white Phosphorus).
- Pictures in social media also show heavy weapons sent to Tigray being loaded onto commercial planes and not military planes (which is prohibited).

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 13 June)

- The OLF says that they have been fighting Eritrean soldiers. Some of those soldiers allegedly burned a house of nine families in West Wallaga.
- According to the Ethiopian Insider, armed rebels killed 27 security personnel in West Oromia.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (per 13 June)

- The Somali Prime minister has established a committee to investigate the complaints of parents who say they have not heard anything from their children who have been sent to Eritrea for military training and deployed in Tigray, without knowledge of approval of the parents.
- Egypt denounced in a letter sent to the president of the UNSC, Addis Ababa's plan to move ahead unilaterally with the second filling of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) in July, a step that is expected to affect the downstream countries' water security.
- The 95-page letter included an overview of the decade-old negotiations between Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia as well as how the latest round, which was held under the brokerage of the African Union (AU), faltered due to Addis Ababa's intransigence, says the report.

- Egypt's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sameh Shoukry, has accused Ethiopia of obstructing efforts to reach an agreement on the latter's controversial dam.
- Shoukry also said that Addis Ababa has no real political will to reach an agreement with the two downstream countries, namely Egypt and Sudan.
- "Egypt firmly rejects conducting the second filling before reaching an agreement, and in the event that it occurs, there will be political measures that protect the interests of the downstream countries," he said, "Both Egypt and Sudan will resort to all available means to preserve their water interest."
- Shoukry added that "all options are available" in the Ethiopian dam crisis after evaluating the developments of the situation, following all developments in detail, and in coordination with Sudan.
- He explained that Egyptian state institutions monitor and deal with every action taken by Ethiopia with precision and consideration for the interest of the Egyptian people.
- An urgent meeting of the Arab region's Ministers of Foreign Affairs will be held, on Tuesday, in the Qatari capital, Doha, in efforts to address the GERD issue, upon the request of Cairo and Khartoum.
- The Nile for Peace Initiative called for the need to reach a legally-binding agreement that preserves the water rights of Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia in the Nile over the GERD filing and operation policies.

International situation (per 13 June)

- The G7 released a statement which included a section on Tigray. It stated that it condemns the ongoing violence, and that all Eritrean must withdraw from Tigray, calling for an inclusive political dialogue in Ethiopia to foster national reconciliation and consensus in the future.
- EU Council President Michel says that Tigray was on top of the agenda of G7 today and that 7 months of conflict, atrocities, ethnic-based violence, human rights and IHL violations are leading thousands of innocent people to one of the worst man-made famines ever. The G7 calls on the entirety of the international community to act.
- Prior to the G7, the Ethiopian Minister of Foreign affairs, Demeke Mekonnen, published a statement denying that hunger was being used as a weapon or war in Tigray.
- He accused humanitarian organisations of smuggling weapons, thus requiring checks to stop this.
- Pope Francis prayed for the people in Tigray today. He said humanitarian needs to be allowed into Tigray. He also called for an end to the fighting in Tigray. He said that he was thinking of the people in Tigray who were "struck by a grave humanitarian crisis that has exposed the poorest to famine. Today there is famine! There is hunger!"
- United States President Joe Biden has approved the deployment of the United States armed forces to Kenya with the aim of helping Kenya Defense Forces (KDF) troops fight the Al Shabaab militia group.
- The US Department of State has released a statement on the upcoming election in Ethiopia. It urges the Ethiopian government to conduct an "inclusive, post-election political dialogue to determine a path forward to strengthen the country's democracy and national unity."
- The US State Department is calling for "All political actors and community leaders to seek to resolve grievances through negotiation, dialogue, and recognized non-violent dispute resolution mechanisms."
- Many Ethiopian opposition politicians have been detained and media have been harassed. It mentions concern about the ethnic violence and the "partisan" activities by local and regional authorities.
- Africa Confidential reports on the changing position of UAE "to moderate support to Addis Abeba".
- Demonstration on Tigray will be held at NATO HeadQuarter in Brussels on 14 June at 14:00 hours.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 169 - 15 June 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of universities, research organizations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Tigray (per 14 June)

- FAO says as of June 2021, conflict and insecurity have displaced almost 2 million people across Tigray and into neighbouring regions.
- FAO also said over 5.5 million people in Tigray require emergency assistance, representing nearly 61 percent of the analyzed population; of whom 2 million require urgent livelihood assistance.
- "It is estimated over 90 percent of the crop harvest was lost (looted, burned and/or destroyed) and 15 percent of the region's 17 million livestock were reported looted or slaughtered," added FAO.
- In an AP story, the organisation describes how famine is being used as a weapon of war in Tigray.
- Witnesses describe how Eritrean soldiers took away the food from pregnant women.
- The AP team also saw Ethiopian soldiers turn away convoys filled with food and emergency supplies. The World Food Organisation said last Thursday that they are only reaching half of the people "they should be reaching".
- Soldiers are also accused of stopping Tigrayans from planting crops, and of stealing farming equipment and livestock. One witness told AP that Eritrean soldiers came upon him as he was looking after his cattle, and shot him and both cows.
- AP says that "Farming has not stopped entirely in Tigray, but it has become a dangerous act of resistance. " Huge craters can be found on the roads and in fields. In Abiy Adi one person told them that "“If they [Eritrean soldiers] see us plowing, they beat us. We only plow when we are sure they are not around.”
- Eritrean soldiers are also contaminating food sources and farming soil.
- Humanitarian workers interviewed in the region said that "if something did not change soon, mass starvation in the region was inevitable. " Another said that food demand was high and "beyond our capacity."
- Malnutrition is also severely affecting newborns. Two children in Ayder Hospital have died due to lack of food. Others are severely underweight and are not eating much.
- One woman described how she had to scavenge for food to ensure her baby survived, and hide in the bush when soldiers approached.
- In an interview with Reuters, Mark Lowcock, the UN Humanitarian Chief, has said that Eritrean forces are "trying to deal with the Tigrayan population by starving them." He continued by saying that food was "definitely" being used as a weapon of war.
- The UN has also said that it has received reports of more than 150 Tigrayans starving to death. Lowcock says that he believes many more have died.
- Reuters also saw many people hospitalised weighing only fractions of their normal weight. One boy of 14 who hid in caves for three months only weighed 14.9 kilos.

- The UN reported that in March 1.187 children were treated for severe wasting in hospitals covering a third of Tigray. In April, the number rose to 1,723. In May, it reached 2,931.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 14 June)

- Seven National and Regional political parties have issued a joint statement complaining about the electoral process.
- They say that their candidates have been subjected to “unspeakable harassment by setting illegal conditions in various constituencies in order not to intentionally register our candidates”.
- They further stated that many people have not been able to register due to overcrowding and registration offices reaching capacity.
- They say that they tried to work with the government to improve the election infrastructure, and this to be the “first free election” in Ethiopian history. However their requests have gone unanswered.
- Ahmedin Jebel, a prominent muslim cleric who was running for the House of People’s Representatives for Jimma city has announced his withdrawal from the upcoming Ethiopian election.
- The prominent cleric was running for a Jimma seat at the House of People’s representatives (HoPR) along side two other members of the Muslim Arbirtary Committe members.
- “It is with humility and great respect that I regret to inform my withdrawal from the race for personal reasons,” he said.

International situation (per 14 June)

- In an interview, Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, US Mission to the UN said the conflict in Tigray has impacted communities and resulted in a man-made disaster/famine and it needs to be addressed.
- Responding to why the UNSC is pushing against holding an open meeting, Amb. Linda said: “They are making a number of arguments. One, that this is a sovereignty issue. My view is sovereignty does not come into play when you have foreign troops in your country, when you people are crossing borders into other countries, and we are watching on national TV your people starve to death. And I have said and I will say here, as I have said in the Security Council, don’t African lives matter?”
- James Duddridge, Minister for Africa for the UK Government said: “There are more people in Tigray in famine than anywhere else in the world, and it is expected to get worse.”
- He told the UK Parliament that the UK government will consider an arms embargo on Ethiopia because of the conflict in Tigray.
- Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs expresses concern over the crisis in Tigray and called for immediate ceasefire, full humanitarian access, human rights protection and national dialogue for reconciliation.
- The Federal Prosecutor’s Office of Brussels confirmed on 2 June 2021 that it has opened a file on various war crimes and crimes against humanity in Tigray, Ethiopia. Several Belgian victims of the war in northern Ethiopia had submitted testimonies to the Prosecutor’s Office. Their relatives were executed and property looted.
- The Union of Tigrayans in Belgium supports the complaint of the Belgian-Tigrayan war victims. Five relatives of victims asked the Federal Prosecutor to conduct an independent investigation into the war criminals within the Ethiopian and Eritrean regimes. It is possible in Belgium to try crimes against humanity, even if they did not take place in Belgium, if some of the victims are Belgian.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 170 - 17 June 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of universities, research organizations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Tigray (per 16 June)

- Fierce fighting between ENDF allied forces and Tigray defense forces was reported in the North western and Central zones of Tigray. Massive fighting was also reported in different parts of Tigray in recent days.
- An eyewitness from Alitena, Erob district, Eastern Tigray told Tigray Media House (TMH) that Eritrean troops killed 13 members of his family and denied them burial for 14 days.
- "Eritrean troops also looted everything from our house. They have killed and burned one of my family members," said the eyewitness.
- The UN humanitarian chief warned that the 1984 famine that killed more than 1 million Ethiopians could occur again if aid access to Tigray is not quickly improved, scaled up and properly funded.
- "There is now famine in Tigray," said Mark Lowcock at a private, informal meeting of the UNSC. He put the blame on Eritrean forces. "Eritrean soldiers are using starvation as a weapon of war," he said.
- He added that: "Rape is being used systematically to terrorize and brutalize women and girls. Aid workers have been killed, interrogated, beaten, blocked from taking aid to the starving and suffering and told not to come back."
- He said the Tigray interim administration has reported deaths from starvation. "The situation is set to get worse in the coming months, not only in Tigray, but in Afar and Amhara, as well."
- He also said the scope of the problem is massive and there were 123 humanitarian agencies operating in the area and 10 times as many aid workers in Tigray today than at the start of the crisis in November.
- "But substantial further scale-up is urgently required if we are to make a significant impact on growing needs," he said.
- Ethiopia's U.N. envoy said Eritrean troops in the Tigray region are expected to "definitely leave soon," after a top U.N. official told the UNSC that Eritrea's soldiers were using starvation as a weapon of war.
- The U.N. ambassador, Taye Atske Selassie Amde, said the Eritrean withdrawal "is a matter of sorting out some technical and procedural issues."
- "Our expectation is that they will definitely leave soon," he told reporters after the council briefing. He also said the situation in Tigray did not warrant the Security Council's attention.
- UNICEF has also warned that 33,000 severely malnourished children in currently unreachable areas of Tigray are also at high risk of death.
- During the webinar "Voices from Tigray" on Crimes against Refugees, testimonies were heard of Eritrean minors being among the soldiers fighting Tigray.
- The Eritrean soldiers are deployed through the mechanism of National Service, which has been qualified as a Crime against Humanity and leaves Eritreans in indefinite slave-like conditions of an integrated approach to militarise all activity in the country.
- The latest National service round, the 33rd round, includes minors who were in the last class of school, and it was said to have been deployed to two refugee camps in Ethiopia, which were both destroyed.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 16 June)

- An Eritrean human smuggler, accused of extorting thousands of refugees and migrants in Libya, has been sentenced to 18 years in prison in Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa.

- Tewelde Goitom, known as Walid, was also ordered to pay a fine of 200,000 birrs (\$4,608) – the maximum allowed, according to Ethiopian legislation.
- Another human trafficker, known as Kidane, escaped from prison in Ethiopia and he is currently back in Libya. He is alleged of committing grave crimes.
- Eyewitnesses told the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) that Ethiopian Airlines is transporting military weapons to Jimma (Oromia), Hawassa (SNNPR), Kombolcha (Amhara) and Mekelle (Tigray).
- Prime Minister Abiy was seen driving a UN plated car for the ruling Prosperity Party final election campaign in the town of Jimma in Oromia regional state on 16 June 2021.
- Amnesty International calls for the release of Dawud Ibsaa, the chairman of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), who is under house arrest for months.

Situation in the Horn region (per 16 June)

- The foreign ministers of Arab countries have backed calls for the United Nations Security Council to intervene in a long-running regional dispute over GERD.
- Ethiopia has rejected an Arab League resolution calling on the UNSC to intervene in a lingering dispute between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia over GERD.
- Ethiopia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the resolution was a repeat of the Arab States' misguided positions on the GERD. "As a result of its egregious support to the baseless claims of Egypt and Sudan related to GERD, the Arab League has already squandered its opportunity to play a constructive role."

International situation (per 16 June)

- Dame Barbara Woodward, UK Ambassador to the UN said Eritrean troops must withdraw from the Tigray region in Ethiopia without delay.
- "We were told in March that Eritrean forces would be withdrawing. It is now June - there can be no further delay," said Woodward during a briefing to the UNSC on Tuesday.
- Woodward also said: "We called today for Council members to come together and urge with one voice for an immediate ceasefire and access to humanitarian aid."
- She further said it is not drought or locusts causing this hunger in Tigray, but the decisions of those in power. That means those in power can also end the suffering.
- Ireland's U.N. ambassador, Geraldine Byrne Nason also said: "All evidence now points towards an unfolding humanitarian catastrophe. People in Tigray are starving and we cannot delay ... we have to ensure that no more lives are lost."
- A report by Facebook says they removed a network of accounts, Pages and Groups in Ethiopia for coordinated inauthentic behavior (CIB).
- "We removed 65 Facebook accounts, 52 Pages, 27 Groups, and 32 accounts on Instagram for violating our policy against coordinated inauthentic behavior. This network originated in and focused on domestic audiences in Ethiopia," said the report.
- The report also said the people behind this activity coordinated with one another and used fake accounts as a central part of their operations to mislead people about who they are and what they are doing, and that was the basis for our action.
- "This network posted primarily in Amharic about news and current events in Ethiopia, including the Prosperity party, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, and criticism of Egypt and Sudan related to Ethiopia's mega dam project," added the report.
- The report added most recently, they commented about protests against the US sanctions on Ethiopia.
- "Although the people behind it attempted to conceal their identities and coordination, our investigation found links to individuals associated with INSA, the Information Network Security Agency in Ethiopia," said the report.

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 171 - 21 June 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of universities, research organizations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Tigray (per 20 June)

- Fierce fighting between Tigray Defense and ENDF allied forces was reported on various fronts in Tigray.
- In recent days, Tigray's Defense Forces have launched a strategic offensive against ENDF allied forces.
- The operation has been ongoing since 18 June.
- The operation has covered many parts of the Central, Southeastern, and Southern zones of Tigray.
- The spokesperson of Tigray Defense Forces told Tigray Media House (TMH) that the 11th, 20th, 21st, 24th, 25th, 31st and 32nd divisions of ENDF have participated in the operation.
- Further, the 21st and 32nd divisions of Eritrean defense forces have also participated in the operation.
- One brigade from the 21st division and two brigades from the 32nd division of the Eritrean defense forces have been completely destroyed.
- The spokesperson also told Dimtsi Weyane (DW) International that ENDF's 31st and 11th divisions were completely destroyed by the operation of Alula AbaNegu.
- Further, commanders, senior logistics, and other staff members of the 31st and 11th divisions have been killed and captured in the operation.
- Col. Hussien, commander of ENDF's 11th division has been captured. Deputy commander, head of logistics, and personnel of ENDF's 31st division were also killed.
- In the operation, thousands have been killed and injured. And over 1,300 ENDF soldiers were captured.
- Besides, 14 (122mm) heavy artillery, 10 (82mm) mortar, 3 (type 120) mortar, 7 Zu-23, over 60 military radios, over 80 vehicles, and other ammunition were also captured by Tigray defense forces.
- The whereabouts of the commander of ENDF's 31st division remains unknown. He might be killed.
- ENDF soldiers who were stationed around Gijet, South-eastern Tigray were also completely destroyed.
- Getachew Reda, advisor to the ousted President of the Tigray government announced on his Facebook page that: "Abiy has lost two more divisions today and the Tigray defense forces officially has more artillery pieces than most of the Abiy's divisions. We have more POWs that we did bargain for."
- OCHA says the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) shows that over 350,000 people are already facing catastrophic conditions.
- OCHA also said more than 550 cases of gender-based violence, including rape, were officially reported in May. About 70 cases were against girls under 18.
- OCHA added that some 5,500 displaced people sheltering at Axum University were moved to relocation sites in Shire.
- "Population from Amhara region have been seen to have moved into the Western zone of Tigray and occupy empty houses and land in several locations," said OCHA.

Situation in the Horn region (per 20 June)

- The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the ACHPR) says on 4 November 2020 the government of Ethiopia launched a military offensive against the TPLF, which was followed by attacks on the Northern Command of the ENDF by the TPLF on the same day.
- The finding of the Commission contradicts the Federal government claim that law enforcement operation in Tigray was taken due to TPLF's attack on the Northern Command.
- The Commission also said: "In accordance with its mandate of promotion and protection of human rights in Africa under Article 45 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (the African

Charter),” a Commission of Inquiry on Tigray was formed and “will officially commence its work on 17 June 2021.”

- According to the ACHPR, the Commission of Inquiry will begin its work from its headquarters in Banjul, Republic of The Gambia.
- “The Commission of Inquiry has a mandate to, inter alia, investigate allegations of violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, and to gather all relevant information so as to determine whether the allegations constitute serious and massive violations of human rights,” said the ACHPR.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 20 June)

- Ethiopia calls on the African Union (AU) to stop the Commission of inquiry on rights abuse in Tigray.
- The Minister of Foreign Affairs said: “It is regrettable to note that the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights made a unilateral announcement on the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry and it was completely outside the scope of the invitation by the government and lacks legal basis.”
- The Ethiopian Immigration has temporarily suspended acceptance of E-visa and visa on arrival services effective 20 June 2021 departure from the U.S.
- Ethiopia’s foreign ministry dismissed EU special envoy Pekka Haavisto’s comments as “ludicrous” and a “hallucination of sorts or a lapse in memory of some kind.”
- Ethiopia’s leaders in closed-door talks with the EU Special Envoy to the Horn of Africa earlier this year said “they are going to wipe out the Tigrayans,” the envoy said this week, warning that such an aim “looks for us like ethnic cleansing.”
- “When I met the Ethiopian leadership in February they really used this kind of language, that they are going to wipe out the Tigrayans for 100 years and so forth,” said Pekka Haavisto.
- Haavisto added: “For me, this referred to very serious human rights atrocities and crimes. If you wipe out a national minority, it’s obvious that we have to react because it looks like ethnic cleansing.”

International situation (per 20 June)

- The UK Embassy in Ethiopia says reports of forced return of Eritrean refugees and extrajudicial killings are unacceptable and called for the violence to stop now.
- US Congressman Michael McCaul says systematic crimes by Ethiopia call into question whether genocide is occurring in Tigray. Addressing US Amb to the UN, Mr. McCaul also said the Ethiopian government's behaviour in Tigray points to possible genocide.
- “As the fighting continues, there is starvation and systematic rape being used as a weapon of war. And comments from [USAID head Samantha Power] that Ethiopia is 'destroying the reproductive health of Tigrayans' really calls into question whether conditions amount to genocide under the 1948 Genocide Convention,” said Mr. McCaul said.
- The Elders called on the UN Security Council and the African Union to take urgent steps to address the unfolding humanitarian and human rights crisis in Tigray, which poses a threat to regional peace and security in the Horn of Africa.
- Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former president of Liberia and member of The Elders also said: “I call upon the AU to address the humanitarian and human rights catastrophe that is unfolding in its host country, and urge the AU Chairperson to lead regional efforts to facilitate a political solution to the Tigray crisis and prevent further instability.”

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 172 - 22 June 2021

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Reported situation in Tigray (per 21 June)

- Fierce fighting between Tigray defense forces and ENDF allied forces has continued in many parts of Tigray as part of the operation Alula Abanega.
- Reported that ENDF's 21st division has been defeated by Tigray Defense Forces.
- Tigray Defense Forces has controlled many key strategic roads and towns in recent days.
- Reported that ENDF soldiers had left a radar station in Ashegoda, 5km from Mekelle, the regional capital. The soldiers reportedly retreated to Mekelle.
- Reported that dozens of Eritrean troops have surrendered to Tigray Defense Forces near Axum, Central zone of Tigray.
- New York Times (NYT) says by early last November, word reached Washington that war was looming in Tigray.
- NYT said Chris Coons, who has a longstanding interest in Africa, phoned Mr Abiy to warn about the perils of resorting to military force.
- NYT added that :“Mr Coons, a democrat from Delaware, said he reminded the Ethiopian leader that the American Civil War and World War I had started with promises of swift military victory, only to drag on for years and cost millions of lives.”
- Further, NYT said Mr Abiy was undeterred. “He was confident it would be over in six weeks,” said Mr. Coons. Days later, on the evening of the American presidential election, fighting erupted in Tigray.
- In an interview with the BBC, the Ethiopian Prime Minister has said that “there is no hunger in Tigray”.
- He also said that “not only Eritreans are there, but also Sudanese are there”. He continued by saying that he is working with both of them to resolve the situation.
- He also said that he is not pushing the Eritreans out.
- He told the BBC that his government was working with Sudanese troops in Tigray - but did not explain in what capacity.
- According to the IOMs Displacement Matrix, there are 1.7 million displaced people in Tigray.
- IOM Mobile Health and Nutrition Teams have provided 14.4 thousand people with medical consultation since the start of the conflict. They have also screened 4 thousand children for malnutrition. 4,7% were found to be suffering from malnutrition.

Ethiopian Elections (per 21 June)

- Voting took place in Ethiopia on Monday. While the Prime Minister and some analysts have called the election the first free election in 18 years, others have said that the election only allows some people to vote.
- Over 37 Million of the 107 Million people living in Ethiopia are Registered to vote. 47 parties are taking part. PM Abiy's Prosperity Party is fielding the most candidates by a significant margin.
- In the previous election in 2015, the ruling coalition won all 547 seats of the Ethiopian lower House.
- A fifth of Ethiopian parliamentary constituencies are not voting. Voting has been delayed or cancelled due to logistical problems or violence
- A foreign election observer has reportedly been killed in Addis Ababa.

- In an opinion piece for the New York Times, the founder of the Addis Standard, Tsedale Lemma, wrote that while Prime Minister Abiy wants an Ethiopia “where every Ethiopian moves around relaxed, works and prospers” and ones whose “sovereignty is respected and feared, and whose territorial integrity is preserved” he has done terrible damage to the country. It is tearing the country apart.
- He argues that he has displaced two million Ethiopians and compromised Ethiopian territorial integrity by allowing Eritrean soldiers to remain in Tigray.
- He also argues that the conflict in Tigray is not an isolated incident, and that instead PM Abiy has been “ruthlessly centralize power.”
- Abiy wants to unite Ethiopia behind a strong unitary government. However, Tsedale Lemma argues that it is tearing the country apart. All out war has started in Tigray, Oromia is seeing a “brutal crackdown”, and thousands of opposition politicians have been imprisoned. The two main Oromo Political parties have decided to boycott the election in protest, leaving Abiy’s party uncontested.
- Lastly she argues that the election taking place in Ethiopia is underwhelming as entire regions (such as Tigray) have been excluded, logistical issues and security have stopped many people from voting, and half a million Internally Displaced People are unlikely to be able to vote.
- She argues that far from bringing the country together, it is likely to divide it further.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (per 21 June)

- The UN Human Rights chief, Bachelet, said on Monday that she is “deeply disturbed” by reports of continued violations including executions in Tigray.
- She also said that there have been continued reports of sexual violence against children and forced displacement in Tigray.
- Bachelet also said that a joint investigation should be ready by August. The joint investigation is happening in conjunction with the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission.
- The Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) & Oromo Federalist Congress (OFC) have denounced the detention of Oromo refugees. They say they have received information that many refugees are being detained in centers and camps.

International situation (per 21 June)

- The U.S has condemned Eritrea’s continued troop presence in Ethiopia’s Tigray region and calls for the immediate and verifiable withdrawal of Eritrean forces from the Tigray region.
- “We remain gravely concerned that Eritrean government forces continue to commit human rights abuses, including extrajudicial killings, rape, and sexual violence, and by credible reports that they are forcibly returning Eritrean refugees to Eritrea,” said the U.S statement.
- The statement also said the U.S is gravely concerned about the role of Eritrean forces in preventing humanitarian access to populations in Tigray, directly contributing to conditions of famine.
- The Council of the EU has just appointed a new Special Representative to the Horn: Annette Weber, a German specialist on the Horn of Africa.
- Weber has previously been a researcher for Amnesty International in Sudan, and published reports on Sexual Violence in Darfur.
- EEPA is holding a Webinar on “The involvement of Eritreans in the war in Tigray” on June 29th, 14:00-16:00 EAT, 13:00-15:00 CET, 07.00-09.00 U.S East. The registration link is: <https://bit.ly/3qfQ335>

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 173 - 23 June 2021

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Reported situation in Tigray (per 22 June)

- It is reported that Operation Alula by Tigray Defense Forces (TDF) has resulted in defeat of Ethiopian allied troops in many areas from Abiy Adi to the river Giba. TDF is close to the outskirts of Mekelle.
- The TDF would control several roads including the road to Adigrat at Agula'e as well as the road to the south, surrounding Mekelle.
- The reports suggest that TDF has encircled Mekelle from 3 sides from a distance; ENDF units that had been airlifted into Mekelle are unable to move to Adigrat or to the South as roads are blocked.
- The TDF took control of Adigrat for several hours to gather supplies. It was taken by the TDF without a fight after Ethiopian troops withdrew from the city. The TDF withdrew after having gathered supplies located in the city. Eritrean troops then entered Adigrat.
- Reported that Adigrat was shelled by Eritrean forces when EDF reached Adigrat. The ENDF has denied that it lost control of the area.
- Reported that the bombing was heard in Mekelle overnight, but people have resumed their work as normal.
- Reported that Agulae has fallen to the TDF.
- Images shown of large numbers of Prisoners of War (POW) taken by the TDF. TDF spokesperson Getachew Reda states that the 'Government of Tigray' has requested ICRC to help feed the POW as there are "far too many".
- There are several reports that several people were killed in an airstrike in Togoga, 25 km from Mekelle. Ethiopian airplanes dropped a bomb on a market. Five people that have been wounded have reportedly arrived in Ayder Hospital in Mekelle, among them children.
- The airstrike reportedly took place on Market day. It is unclear how many people were killed.
- There are also reports of ambulances sent from Mekelle to help bring injured civilians in Togoga has been denied passage by ENDF soldiers who control the checkpoints.
- The UNHCR has said that there are an estimated 1.7 million IDPs in Tigray. They added that in some classrooms in Mekelle, 5 refugees sleep on a single mattress.
- An Eritrean soldier has provided testimony that he was sent directly from prison to Sheraro on October 30, and he said that he arrived in Sheraro via Badme on November 2. He knows the dates because there was a TV in the prison so he knows he was released on October 30th.
- It would appear that the prisoners were released to fight in the war in Tigray, prior to the start of the war on 3-4 November.
- Another Eritrean refugee testifies that "The Eritrean army kidnapped many Eritreans from Tigray and brought them back to Eritrea. Some people came back to Eritrea and left again to Sudan."

- The testimony states that people that were forced to return were put in prison for a month, and then forced to join the National Service. Deserters and former soldiers remained imprisoned longer.

Ethiopian Elections (per 22 June)

- Counting is underway in the 437 constituencies where voting took place on Monday. In 110 constituencies voting did not take place, most being delayed until September. In the 38 Tigrayan Constituencies no date has been set yet.
- The Ethiopian Citizens for Social Justice party (Ezema) said it filed 207 complaints after officials and militias blocked election observers.
- The Ethiopian National Election Board chairwoman said that opposition election observers had been chased away from polls in two regions.
- The Board also said that the certified results would be announced within 10 days.
- The Safaricom-led group which gained a bid for telecom operations in Ethiopia has received US approval despite US economic sanctions.

International situation (per 22 June)

- Belgium states that it 'emphatically' denounces the involvement of Eritrean troops in the Tigray conflict at the UN Human Rights Council.
- Belgium announces that a resolution on the human rights situation in Eritrea will be presented later in the 47th session of the Human Rights Council.
- Germany states in the Human Rights Council that the involvement of Eritrean soldiers in human rights violations in Tigray is grave cause for concern.
- Germany remains very concerned about massive restrictions of human rights in Eritrea.
- The United Kingdom raised allegations of atrocities committed by Eritrea forces in Tigray, including using famine as a weapon of war at the Human Rights Council, calling it "unacceptable". The UK stated that Eritrea must remove its forces from Tigray immediately.
- The EU Council discussed on Monday 21 June the dramatic situation in Tigray, Ethiopia, "where a full-blown humanitarian crisis is currently pushing an estimated 400,000 people to the brink of man-made famine and loss of life."
- The EU Council will discuss Ethiopia as a full discussion item on the agenda of the July Foreign Affairs Council.
- The Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the US Senate, Gregory Meeks, states that he is gravely concerned the elections in Ethiopia are far from "credible, free, and fair".
- The Qatar National Bank has sued Eritrea over a 286 Million US\$ loan that was never repaid. The Washington DC Bankruptcy Court has ruled that Eritrea is in default. The arrangement may allow Qatar National Bank to seize property of Eritrea worldwide.
- EEPA is holding a Webinar on "The involvement of Eritreans in the war in Tigray" on June 29th, 14:00-16:00 EAT, 13:00-15:00 CET, 07:00-09:00 U.S East. The registration link is: <https://bit.ly/3qfQ335>

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 174 - 24 June 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of universities, research organizations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Tigray (per 23 June)

- Reported that ENDF's 13th and 20th divisions who were stationed around Agula and Wurko have been heavily attacked by Tigray defense forces. Over 100 vehicles were captured.
- The Spokesperson of Tigray defense forces told Dimtsi Weyane (DW) International that over 10,000 ENDF soldiers were killed by Operation Alula Abanega and 3,356 were captured including senior commanders.
- The Associated Press said (AP) says an airstrike hit a busy market in the Tigray region village of Togoga on Tuesday.
- Health workers told AP that Ethiopian soldiers blocked medical teams from traveling to the scene and dozens of people were killed.
- Doctors and a nurse in Mekelle told AP that they were unable to confirm how many people were killed, but one doctor said health workers at the scene reported "more than 80 civilian deaths."
- Wounded patients being treated at Mekele's Ayder hospital told health workers that a plane dropped a bomb on Togoga's marketplace.
- "The six patients included a 2-year-old child with abdominal trauma and a 6-year-old," said a nurse.
- The nurse added that an ambulance carrying a wounded baby to Mekelle, almost 60 kilometers (37 miles) away by road, was blocked for two hours and the baby died on the way.
- Hailu Kebede, foreign affairs head for the Salsay Woyane Tigray opposition party told the AP that one fleeing witness to the attack had counted more than 30 bodies and other witnesses were reporting more than 50 people killed.
- Many more were said to be wounded in the remote village that's linked to Mekelle in part by challenging stretches of dirt roads.
- "It was horrific," said an aid worker who told the AP he had spoken with a colleague and others at the scene. "We don't know if the jets were coming from Ethiopia or Eritrea. They are still looking for bodies by hand. More than 50 people were killed, maybe more."
- Health workers said on Tuesday afternoon, a convoy of ambulances attempting to reach Togoga, about 25 kilometers (15 miles) west of Mekelle, was turned back by soldiers near the village of Tukul.
- Several more ambulances were turned back later in the day and on Wednesday morning, but one group of medical workers reached the site on Tuesday evening via a different route.
- Those medical workers were treating 40 wounded people but told colleagues in Mekele that the number of wounded is likely higher as some people fled after the attack.
- "We have been asking, but until now we didn't get permission to go, so we don't know how many people are dead," said one of the doctors in Mekelle.
- Another doctor said the Red Cross ambulance he was traveling in on Tuesday while trying to reach the scene was shot at twice by Ethiopian soldiers, who held his team for 45 minutes before ordering them back to Mekelle.
- "We are not allowed to go," he said. "They told us whoever goes, they are helping the troops of the TPLF."

- Reported that an Ethiopian C-130 Hercules warplane was downed by Tigray Defence Forces near the town of Gijet.
- The warplane was reportedly transporting soldiers and weapons from the Amhara capital, Bahir Dar to Mekelle, Tigray.
- The UNHCR has released a new report on the situation in Tigray.
- Regarding the 25 thousand Eritrean refugees missing from Shimelba and Hitsats refugee camps, 8359 have arrived in Adi Harush and Mai Aini camps. UNHCR says that it has identified 13687 refugees in total.
- UNHCR and its partners are moving ahead with plans to establish a new camp in Dabat, in the Amhara region. The camp is meant to house 20 thousand refugees.
- From interviews and assessments conducted with IDPs, the UNHCR found that 74% of IDPs do not feel safe living in IDP shelters due to fear of “military or armed presence”.
- Tigrayan refugees are also continuing to arrive in Sudan. The UNHCR says that there are fewer than 30 arriving every day.
- The UNHCR also launched the Ethiopia Country Refugee Response Plan (CRRP). It is a multi-agency response strategy and financial requirements to provide protection services, humanitarian assistance, and development opportunities for refugees across the country.

Reported situation in Ethiopian (per 23 June)

- Ethiopian Airlines said it has resumed flights to Asmara, Eritrea.

Reported situation in the Horn region (per 23 June)

- Sudan has asked the United Nations Security Council to meet and discuss a dispute over a giant dam being built by Ethiopia on the Blue Nile.
- On Tuesday, Sudan’s Foreign Minister Mariam Sadiq al-Mahdi called on the Security Council to hold a session as soon as possible to discuss GERD and “its impact on the safety and security of millions of people.”
- In a letter, al-Mahdi called on the council head to urge Ethiopia to stop the “unilateral” filling of the dam “which exacerbates the dispute and poses a threat to regional and international peace and security.”

International situation (per 23 June)

- European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said on Wednesday in Berlin: “The situation in Tigray is appalling,”, noting that “today a military airstrike has been producing a lot of casualties against the civilians.”
- In a Joint press statement with Commissioner Lenarčič, the EU High representative said that the EU strongly condemns the targeting of civilians.
- “This is not justifiable in any terms and goes against International Humanitarian Law. Those atrocities cannot be justified by using the preservation of the territorial integrity of Ethiopia as an argument,” said the joint press statement.
- They also said that if the blocking of ambulances was confirmed, it would constitute a “grave violation of the Geneva Convention and of International Humanitarian Law.”
- EEPA is holding a Webinar on “The involvement of Eritreans in the war in Tigray” on June 29th, 14:00-16:00 EAT, 13:00-15:00 CET, 07.00-09.00 U.S East. The registration link is: <https://bit.ly/3qfQ335>

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 175 - 28 June 2021

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Reported situation in Tigray (per 27 June)

- Three MSF workers were killed in Tigray on Thursday. MSF lost contact with them on Thursday, and their bodies were found the next morning. It brings the number of aid workers that have been killed in the conflict to twelve.
- The victims from MSF were an emergency coordinator from Madrid, an Ethiopian assistant coordinator, and an Ethiopian driver. The international community has widely condemned the killing.
- Borell, the EU high representative for foreign affairs, and EU Commissioner for Crisis Management Janez Lenarčič, released a statement condemning the attack. They stated that the “targeting of civilians and aid workers adds to existing allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity as well as the use of starvation and sexual violence as weapons of war. “
- The Ethiopian military has confirmed on Thursday that it was performed the airstrike on Togoga village last Tuesday. The airstrike killed 64 people. The ENDF said that it was targeting fighters, however, a doctor that arrived on the scene said that most of the victims were “mothers, children, and elderly fathers. There were few young men.”
- Togoga is also called Edagaselus, which translates to “Tuesday Market”. Reportedly, the day of the attack was a very busy day, as it was taking place before planting season. Many farmers would have been present to sell wares and buy seeds.
- The BBC was told by locals that no fighters were present in the area. However, it also added that locals were unlikely to tell them.
- The UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, has condemned the airstrike on Tagoga. He added that independent investigation into the airstrike is necessary.
- There have also been new reports that the Ethiopian military launched new airstrikes on June 27th in Central and Southern Tigray.
- USAID states that 900 thousand people in Tigray are facing famine with millions more at risk.
- Samantha Power, the USAID administrator, also said that PM Abiy was wrong in saying that there was no hunger in Tigray. She added that “critical aid is being blocked & prevented from saving lives.”
- OCHA has released a new report on the situation in Tigray. It says that it has reached 3.1 million people since 1 May out of 5.2 million people in need.
- OCHA says that they are facing a serious funding gap of 300 million US Dollars.
- Reported that ethnic Tigrayan construction contractors and professors have been recently abducted from Mekelle University and Bole International Airport by Ethiopian security forces. Their whereabouts remain unknown.
- All roads and flights to and from Tigray have been halted by the Ethiopian government.
- There is communication and internet blackout in the Tigray region and in Mekelle and flights to Mekelle are stopped for now.
- In Tigray, transport from and to the regional capital, Mekelle has also been halted by ENDF and Eritrean soldiers.

Reported military situation (per 27 June)

- The Tigrayan Defence Force claims to have made extensive territorial gains. The Ethiopian government denies this, but the TDF has released footage of captured Ethiopian equipment. They have also released pictures of at least hundreds of Ethiopian and Eritrean prisoners of war.
- The former head of Information Network Security Agency (INSA) of Ethiopia, General Teklebrhan W/Aregay said on his Twitter page that $\frac{2}{3}$ of ENDF soldiers (around 7 divisions) were killed, wounded and captured within one week of TDF Operation Alula.
- Reported that unusual warplane flights were seen in Mekelle city coming from unusual directions.
- There are also reports that ENDF soldiers stationed at the outskirts of Mekelle has pointed the direction of their heavy artilleries towards the city.

Reported situation in the Horn region (per 27 June)

- Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said Egypt hopes that the UNSC will enhance Egyptian and Sudanese efforts to reach a legally binding deal over the filling and operation of GERD.
- Shoukry also said Egypt “will have exhausted all peaceful means” if Ethiopia does not abide by the UNSC reaction on the GERD issue.
- Shoukry affirmed that the UNSC would be the last option available within the diplomatic framework.
- “In case we do not reach an agreement after all these efforts, we will have exhausted all the peaceful means and the extent of intransigence and absence of political will from the Ethiopian side and the extent of flexibility by Egypt and Sudan would be revealed to the international community,” said Shoukry.
- Commenting on the letter sent by Ethiopia to the UNSC, Shoukry said the accusations in the letter are all “claims” and “attempts to evade responsibility” and “blame others to cover the reality of the Ethiopian side.”

International situation (per 27 June)

- A 72-page report accuses Western media of “being complicit in spreading disinformation about the crisis in Tigray, Ethiopia, and Eritrea’s involvement in the ongoing conflict”.
- Reportedly Eritrean and Ethiopian ministers and diplomats have helped spread and publicize the report which accuses Western media and governments of scapegoating Eritrea for the conflict in Tigray.
- The report entitled “Disinformation in Tigray: Manufacturing Consent For a Secessionist War”, was written by an organisation (New Africa Institute) that does not have a registered NPO address, and only has one employee. This employee is reportedly a vocal Eritrean government supporter.
- The report uses fact checking tropes and other forms of manipulation to dismiss evidence of atrocities committed in Tigray as disinformation. Among the facts that are being denied is the large scale sexual violence being committed by Eritrean soldiers in Tigray, claiming such rape does not happen in Eritrea.
- The author of the report said that “officials in various countries are reviewing what was said in that report, and it is potentially being used in diplomatic circles.”
- The Atlantic Council, publishing on the report, is a well-known spin doctor for the Eritrean regime and was previously linked to interests of the mining industry - such as Nevsum, in Eritrea, as pointed out by [journalists Francois Christoph](#) and [Martin Plaut](#).
- EEPA is holding a Webinar on “The involvement of Eritreans in the war in Tigray” on June 29th, 14:00-16:00 EAT, 13:00-15:00 CET, 07.00-09.00 U.S East. The registration link is: <https://bit.ly/3qfQ335>

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[Rapport Disinformation in Tigray](#)

[Francois Christoph on Atlantic Council](#)

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 176 - 29 June 2021

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Reported situation in Tigray (per 28 June)

- The Ethiopian government has declared a unilateral ceasefire in the Tigray region - 8 months after Prime Minister Abiy sent troops to oust its leadership.
- The Government of the National State of Tigray releases a Press Release from the Government of Tigray in the evening of 29 June 2021.
- The Government of Tigray states: "First and foremost, we would like to share the great news to the entire people and friends of Tigray that our beloved capital city, Mekelle, is now under the complete control of the Tigray Defense Forces and the legally elected Government of Tigray is back in its rightful place."
- The Government of Tigray states that: "This stunning victory was made possible as a result of the lightning operation named after the great African General Ras Alula Aba Nega."
- The Spokesperson of the Tigray government, Liya Kassa told Dimsti Weyane (DW) that the regional capital, Mekelle is under full control of the Tigray Defense Forces as part of operation Alula Abanega.
- "We would like to share the great news to the entire people and friends of Tigray that our beloved capital city, Mekelle, is now under the complete control of the Tigray Defense Forces and the legally elected Government of Tigray is back in its rightful place," she said.
- The ENDF troops have completely pulled out from Mekelle and major towns in Tigray.
- ENDF and Eritrean troops, which were fleeing Mekelle, has been told to surrender by the Tigray Defense Forces near Mekelle.
- Reported that the majority of ENDF troops who were surrounded at the outskirts of Mekelle while fleeing has been captured by Tigray defense forces.
- Reported that the capital of Tigray, Mekelle is fully controlled by the Tigray Defense Forces.
- The Tigray Defence Forces has also controlled Qwiha and Alula-AbaNega International Airport.
- Reported that FM Mekelle 104.4 radio has been controlled by Tigray Defense Forces.
- Residents of Mekelle are celebrating after Tigray Defense Forces controlled Mekelle, dancing and singing on the streets in the evening.
- People holding the flag of the Tigray regional state gathered on the main streets of the city.
- Fierce fighting between Eritrean and Ethiopian troops and Tigray defense forces was reported near Shire, Northwestern Tigray. Reported that Tigray Defense Forces control the town of Shire in Northwestern Tigray.
- The town of Alamata and Korem, Southern zone of Tigray is controlled by Tigray defense forces.
- Reported that Amhara forces fleeing the town of Humera in Western Tigray after the major towns of Tigray were controlled by Tigray defense forces.
- Tigray Media House (TMH) said ENDF soldiers burned the military training base found in Qwiha while escaping from the city of Mekelle.
- ENDF soldiers cut communication services and networks of WFP, UNICEF, and other UN organizations in Mekelle.

- The Executive Director of UNICEF, Henrietta Fore said: “Members of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces entered our office in Mekelle, Tigray, Ethiopia on 28 June and dismantled our VSAT equipment.”
- “This act violates UN privileges and immunities and the rules of International Humanitarian Law regarding respect for humanitarian relief objects. I condemn this in strongest terms,” said Fore.
- Fore added UNICEF’s priority in Tigray, and across Ethiopia, is to help the most vulnerable children, including the 140,000 children already facing famine-like conditions and we should never be a target.
- “I ask all parties to the conflict in Tigray to abide by the rules of war and to respect and protect humanitarian agencies,” added Fore.
- Fore also said parties to the conflict must not search, confiscate or interfere with humanitarian relief operations and must allow access to the populations in need as well as protect children at all times.
- Agence France-Presse (AFP) said the Interim government fled the Tigray capital after Tigray Defense Forces reportedly take control of the city.
- Reported that after Mekelle was controlled by the Tigray Defence Forces, the interim administration assigned by the federal government had asked for a ceasefire.
- The head of the Tigray interim administration, Mr. Abraham Belay, called for an end to the fighting and called for negotiations.
- The announcement came as witnesses reported Tigray forces in the streets of Tigray's capital, Mekelle.
- According to BBC, Getachew Reda, the spokesperson for the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), told news agency Reuters the city was now under their control.
- During the day, the residents have seen the Ethiopian military leaving the city and the city residents were tense.

Situation in Ethiopia (per 28 June)

- Reported that gunfire shooting was heard at Kilaity prison in Addis Abeba where major opposition leaders such as Jawar Mohammed and Bekele Gereba are imprisoned.
- Following the fall of Mekelle to Tigray defense forces, a high number of federal forces has been deployed to the streets of Addis Abeba.

Reported situation in the Horn region (per 28 June)

- Sudan has rejected an Ethiopian proposal to manage the filling for a second time of a giant dam that it is building on the Blue Nile.
- A Sudanese official said the Ethiopian proposal for the second filing was “not real” and “a way to buy time”, adding any proposal should come under the auspices of AU mediators and involve all parties.
- “Ethiopia had put forward impossible conditions related to the division of the share of the water, which Sudan considers outside the scope of negotiations,” said the Sudanese official.

International situation (per 28 June)

- António Guterres, SG of the UN said recent events in the Tigray region of Ethiopia are extremely worrisome. They demonstrate once again that there is no military solution to the crisis.
- “I have just spoken to Prime Minister Abiy and I am hopeful that an effective cessation of hostilities will take place. It is essential that civilians are protected, humanitarian aid reach the people in need and a political solution is found,” said Guterres.
- EEPA is holding a Webinar on “The involvement of Eritrea in the war in Tigray” on June 29th, 14:00-16:00 EAT, 13:00-15:00 CET, 07.00-09.00 U.S East. The registration link is: <https://bit.ly/3qfQ335>

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Reported situation in Tigray (per 28 June)

- The Tigray Defense Forces have reportedly taken control of Axum, Adwa and Shire. There were reports earlier in the day that the Eritrean Defence force withdrew from those cities. The TDF now is in control.
- Reported that ENDF troops were forcing drivers and private car owners to drive them out of Mekelle while fleeing the capital.
- The former TPLF-led government of Tigray, the Tigray Government, which has taken control of the capital of Mekelle.
- The Tigray government has not responded to the unilateral ceasefire offered by Ethiopian leader PM Abiy. The TPLF says it will talk under the conditions already set earlier such as the withdrawal of Ethiopian, regional and foreign troops from Tigray.
- The Tigray Government, which continues to be led by President Debretsion, has a political arm (the government) and a military wing (the Tigray Defense Forces).
- Eritrean troops are reportedly trying to flee to Eritrea but many are blocked by TDF which reportedly controls all outgoing roads. Despite the agreement that Eritrean troops would withdraw from Eritrea three months ago, this had not happened.
- The spokesperson from the Eritrean Government, Minister of Information Yemane G/Meskel has not responded to journalists' questions regarding withdrawal of Eritrean troops.
- G/Meskel made the following statement in twitter: "TPLF trolls - & their enablers - are incapable of reading/infering from contemporary history: Igri Metkel, Adi-Begiao, Assab front, Tsorona/2016 & recent military debacles. By the same token, they cannot comprehend the profound meaning, dimensions & manifestations of "GAME OVER""
- The Addis Standard reports that the Amhara branch of the ruling Prosperity Party (APP) has warned the TDF that the areas captured by Amharic regional forces in former Western Tigray belong to the Amhara region and that the regional forces had liberated these areas from Tigray.
- The Spokesman of the Tigray Government, Getachaw Reda said Tigray Defense Forces will enter neighbouring Eritrea and the Amhara region to pursue "enemy" forces, if it is required.
- In a call with Reuters, he also said that the unilateral ceasefire declared by the Ethiopian government is a "joke". Hundreds more have been killed in fighting near the Afar region in Ethiopia on Tuesday.
- "Our primary focus is to degrade enemy fighting capabilities...So if going to Amhara is what it takes, we will do it, if going to Eritrea is what it takes, we will do it," said Getachaw.
- According to a report from TDF Central Command: in the operation Alula Abanega, 28,300 troops killed and 6011 captured.
- The TDF has captured 600 vehicles since the start of the offensive.
- The TDF also captured materials: 25 (122mm) heavy artillery, 6 (107) rockets, 13 (120mm) mortar, 78 (82mm) mortar, 16 Zu-23, 142 Dshk, 630 Bren, thousands of Klashinkovs, 391 different military vehicles and 747 military radios in the operation.
- Also 6 heavy artillery, 6 Zu-23, 4 (107) rockets, and 88 military vehicles were burned.

- CNN reports that Gebre Gebretsadkan, Tigray's military spokesperson said that "the TDF had downed an Ethiopian air force plane, as part of a renewed offensive against the Ethiopian military."
- CNN reports that Ethiopia's military spokesman has denied that the plane had been shot down, stating that the plane had crashed due to technical issues.
- A nurse from Ayder Hospital has told CBS that Ethiopian soldiers shot at university students while withdrawing from Mekelle. It killed two and wounded three.
- German newspaper Der Spiegel documents serious Sexual Violence against women in Tigray including hurting women in gang rape for days, in front of relatives and stuffing the women's private parts as well as burning it with acid.
- Der Spiegel also reports deliberate attempts to infect women with HIV/AIDS. The article states that - even though this is difficult to prove, the number of HIV/AIDS cases has increased.
- Der Spiegel reports the perpetrators provide genocidal reasons to the women, when they speak about the situation, in that they were purposefully sent to Tigray because they had HIV/AIDS so that they would infect the women.

International situation (per 28 June)

- Ireland, the US, and the UK have requested an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council. The meeting could be held as early as Friday, although it is up to France to decide. France holds the Presidency of the council.
- The acting assistant secretary of state for the US State Department's Bureau of African Affairs, Robert Godec, said that the Biden administration was far advanced in its assessment of whether to call events crimes against humanity, genocide or war crimes.
- Godec said: "The administration is in full agreement that horrifying atrocities are being committed in Tigray," he told the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee.
- Godec further said that "We will not stand by in the face of horrors in Tigray," and urged the Eritrean government to immediately join in the cessation of hostilities.
- Godec called for a commitment of all parties to a permanent, negotiated ceasefire in the region.
- US House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Greg Meeks said that there was and to get the crisis in tigray under control and was cited stating that "we could witness one of our closest and most powerful allies in Africa march toward civil war and, eventually, a state collapse."
- Republican Representative Michael McCaul, the top ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, said that in his assessment acts of genocide had been carried out against residents of Tigray.
- McCaul called for targeted sanctions against the perpetrators of genocidal acts in Tigray.
- US Secretary of State Antony Blinken raised Tigray at a Group of 20 meeting of foreign ministers in Italy.
- Blinken stated: "I sought robust action to push all parties to commit to a negotiated ceasefire to resolve the conflict in Tigray."
- US Representative Karen Bass, the chair of the panel's Africa subcommittee, stated that "Every effort must be made to make this ceasefire meaningful, including discussions with all parties to the conflict,"
- Charlie Flanagan, Chair of Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs & Defence of Ireland says that the "International Community must work towards real dialogue between Tigray authorities & Ethiopian Government based on complete withdrawal of Eritrean & Amhara forces."

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 178 - 01 July 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of universities, research organizations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Tigray (per 30 June)

- Fierce fighting between ENDF forces who were fleeing Mekkle and Tigray Defense Forces was reported at a place named Amentila near the Afar region on 29 June.
- Two brigades of ENDF's 12th division participated in the fight. While fleeing Mekelle, they were attacked and killed by Tigray Defense Forces after they refused to surrender.
- The spokesperson of Tigray Defense Forces, Gebre Gebretsadik told Tigray Media House (TMH) that they captured 2 (120mm) heavy artillery, 1 ZU-23 and 1 (127) rocket. Also 1 (107) rocket was burned.
- He also said that, while fleeing Mekelle and major towns in Tigray, ENDF had left one Battalion of the 20th division guarding a military depot in A'rato near the town of Wukro.
- "The Battalion was not informed by ENDF while they were fleeing and had no information about the fall of the regional capital, Mekelle to the Tigray Defense Forces," he added.
- The Battalion was attacked by the Tigray Defense Forces and over 200 soldiers were captured.
- Further confirmation has been coming from sources in the towns that the Tigrayan Defence Force is in control of Shire and Northern cities.
- There have been further reports that Eritrean forces are trying to withdraw to northern Tigray.
- Amnesty International is saying that civilians in Tigray remain in need of urgent protection. It stated that "Amnesty International remains deeply concerned about the safety of civilians in Tigray, who have endured months of fighting and serious human rights abuses, including war crimes, by all sides. As Ethiopian government forces retreat and Tigray regional forces re-establish control, protection of civilians must be paramount."
- They added that there are fears of reprisals against civilians by all sides.
- Most of Tigray was not reachable today.

Statements by the TDF (per 30 June)

- In a new interview with the AP, Getatchew Reda, the spokesperson for the Tigray Government said that "we'll stop at nothing to liberate every square inch" of Tigray.
- He added that the Tigray government will "want to stop the war as quickly as we can".
- He specified that liberating the territory is not just about the land, rather the security of the 6 million Tigrayan people. If the TDF sees the need to occupy Amhara or Eritrean territory to reach that goal, they will do so.
- Getatchew Reda countered an Ethiopian government claim that Eritrean troops were withdrawing from Eritrea. He said it was incorrect, and that instead they have been taking up defensive positions in Northern Tigray.
- Debretsion, who was re-elected as President of Tigray in September 2020, amid an election whose validity was disputed by the Ethiopian Federal Government, has said that the TDF cannot take the cease-fire seriously since the Ethiopians have cut power and communication lines to Mekelle and Tigray. He added that it is just a Ethiopian ploy to regroup. "We will not allow that", he said.

Statements by Ethiopian Officials (per 30 June)

- The party in power in Amhara, the APP, has warned the Tigrayans to not invade Western Tigray. They said that they “freed the land through their own sacrifice” and will fight for it.
- They added that if the Tigrayans tried to retake the land, then “there is no Amhara that will not pay the price for its freedom.”
- The Spokesperson of the Ethiopian Emergency Task Force, Redwan Hussein, claimed: “If it is required, we can easily enter Mekelle, and we can enter in less than three weeks,”.
- Redwan continued saying that the Ethiopian government will shift its focus to the second filling of the GERD dam and regaining disputed territory from Sudan.
- The filling of the dam is expected to resume in mid-July, during the Ethiopian rain season.

International situation (per 30 June)

- The Biden Administration called Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on Tuesday to tell him to restore telecommunication services to Tigray. The US also said it was monitoring the situation closely.
- In a press release from the State Department, the US added that the “United States stands ready to work with the Ethiopian government, Tigrayan authorities, the United Nations, and other international partners to expedite the delivery of life-saving food assistance.”
- According to diplomats briefed on the situation in Addis Ababa, “senior officials within Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed’s government were at odds on how to proceed after claims from senior Tigrayan officials that they would keep fighting Ethiopian troops and their allied Amhara ethnic militias and Eritrean military forces.”
- Two western diplomats said that Eritrean officials are concerned that “the Tigrayans could reverse the tide of the conflict by invading Eritrea.”
- The diplomats added that intense diplomatic efforts are expected within days. The efforts to broker negotiations are expected to involve influential African emissaries.
- The US assistant secretary of state told the House Committee on Foreign Affairs that the US did not know whether Eritrea was withdrawing.
- He said that there has been no indication from Eritrea that it will commit to the ceasefire or withdraw.
- The assistant secretary also said that the famine that is starting to emerge in Tigray is “entirely man made”.
- Lastly he said that “It is essential now that all parties commit to the cease-fire, allow humanitarian access, protect civilians, there be independent investigations into atrocities, and that there is justice for victims.”
- The UN spokesperson said that operations to provide humanitarian aid to the region have been constrained the last few days due to fighting.
- Many telecommunications with Tigray remain cut. The assistant to the administrator for the United States Agency for International Development called on Ethiopia to reestablish communications.
- EEPA held a Webinar on Tuesday entitled “Voices from Tigray: The involvement of Eritrea in the War in Tigray”. The Webinar can be watched online at: <https://youtu.be/mY38kxSdnI0> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFYtUkc6Tgk>. The reports and testimonies discussed in the [webinar](#) are available here: [Testimonies](#) and [presentations 1 Game Over](#) and [2 Eritrean involvement in the war in Tigray](#).

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 179 - 02 July 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of universities, research organizations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Tigray (per 01 July)

- After heavy fighting in Endabaguna yesterday (30/6) between Amhara militia and Tigray Defense Forces, the Tezeke Bridge connecting Western Tigray to Tigray has been destroyed (today 1/7). It is one of the main supply links into Tigray.
- Reported that eye-witnesses said that Amhara militia and ENDF soldiers placed dynamite and then walked away and a few moments later the bridge exploded.
- The destruction of the Tekeze bridge means a devastating blow for humanitarian efforts trying to respond to the looming famine, at catastrophic and emergency levels for 900.000 people in the region.
- UNSC Resolution 2417, unanimously adopted in 2018, recognized the link between conflict and hunger, and condemned the use of starvation as a method of warfare and set out preventative and accountability measures that may be imposed.
- The conflict in Ethiopia is the first real test for the UNSC of whether it can take early action to realize the preventative objectives of the resolution and reduce the risk of conflict-induced hunger or famine.
- Pictures and footage have emerged online of a function in Mekelle, attended by Tigray President Debretsion Gebremichael, the President of the Government of Tigray. The footage shows the President singing the Tigrayan anthem and the President making an announcement.
- Reports that the Government of Tigray, led by President Debretsion, has taken over all administrative affairs, including in Shire with regards to refugee protection.
- A NOTAM (Notice To All AirMen) has been issued for Tigray. No aircraft is allowed to fly under 29 thousand feet. Reportedly, the TDF has retaken control of anti air batteries around the region.
- Reported that prisoners held in Eritrea before the war have been forcibly deployed in Tigray. The arrangements for deployment appear to have been made prior to the war in Tigray started on 4 Nov.
- The Eritrean soldier's testimony reads: "I reached the Ethiopian border on 2 November 2020. It was a large army. Before that, I was in prison. Directly from the prison to Ethiopia. I came with 160 other prisoners. Some of us spent 8, 9 or 10 years in prison. All of us were sent to Ethiopia. Some people spent 13 years in that prison; they arrested them when they tried to escape to Ethiopia."
- The Eritrean soldier specifies: "They released us on 30 October from prison and on 2 November I was in Sheraro. The first point they took us to was called 'Sambal' - all the area is a mountain area. It is called Sambal, very close to Badme. Then we go directly to Sheraro. It's not a big battle, we directly go inside Sheraro. But when we are inside Sheraro, there is fighting, much fighting, for three days."
- The testimony clarifies that the Eritrean soldiers were forced to fight: "There were people who rejected to fight. They said 'why should we die in another country'? Now all of them are in prison. Most of them are in Mai Serwa. They are in very bad condition, like in any prison. No-one knows exactly how they can live, they don't allow their families to visit them. Three of them were my colleagues that I know personally. Even some leaders rejected to fight, so President Isaias sent them to prison first, then on house arrest in a closed area."
- The soldier from Eritrea further testifies that: "Inside the towns in Tigray, there was the Ethiopian army. The Eritrean army was all around the towns. We wore the same uniform as the Ethiopians. Everything

for us, it was like the Ethiopian army, and the Eritrean army was until Mekelle - from the Eritrean border until Mekelle. We have all the army equipment, all the army cars, and even the heavy equipment for bombing.”

- Footage shows Ethiopian Northern command handing over heavy mechanised weapons to Eritrean soldiers on Eritrean territory in Gash-Barka region near Sheraro. The footage is dated 5th of November.
- Reported that since March 2021, Eritrean and Ethiopian forces have been integrated. Eritrean troops have been seen wearing Ethiopian uniforms. Bloomberg reported as early as 8 December 2020.
- More recently CNN reported on 13 May 2021: “A CNN team traveling through Tigray’s central zone witnessed Eritrean soldiers, some disguising themselves in old Ethiopian military uniforms, manning checkpoints, obstructing and occupying critical aid routes, roaming the halls of one of the region’s few operating hospitals and threatening medical staff.”
- Reported that all Bank Accounts opened in the Tigray region were freezed. Bank services were also suspended by the order of federal authorities. Tigray remains under a communication black-out today.

Ceasefire & Secession (per 01 July)

- US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan spoke with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed of Abu Dhabi about resolving and promoting a ceasefire for the conflict in Ethiopia.
- In an opinion piece for Responsible Statecraft, Alex de Waal has argued that the US should send a delegation to Mekelle to negotiate with the Tigrayans and hear their demands.
- He also said that a “humanitarian ceasefire needs to specify how the government will permit aid operations to reach the TDF-controlled areas, which have a population of more than five million people who need emergency aid.” He pointed out that just last week PM Abiy Ahmed accused aid organisations of working with the TDF. The following day three MSF workers were killed.
- He also urged international observers to be sent to Tigray to verify that Amhara and Eritrean troops are withdrawing. He points out that it is in the best interest of everyone as the TDF has threatened to invade Eritrea or Amhara if it does not happen.
- Additionally, he proposed a prohibition for military aircraft to fly over Tigray, Prisoners of War, and a complaints mechanism need to be discussed in order for a ceasefire to be able to last.
- De Waal also argued that “ceasefire should be a step towards political negotiations aiming for peace. Often, a ceasefire agreement includes a commitment to ending hostile rhetoric. That isn’t happening. The Ethiopian statement indicates the opposite intent. It refers to the Tigrayan political leaders as “the criminal clique.” Reda routinely describes the government as ‘fascist.’”
- Bahar Oumer, an Ethiopian Human Rights activist, interprets a press conference as saying that the Ethiopian government has abdicated responsibility for affairs in Tigray.

Developments in Ethiopia (per 01 July)

- Reported that the profiling and arrest of ethnic Tigrayans in Addis Ababa has intensified in recent days.
- Residential areas such as 22, Bole and Teklehayamnot were targeted by Ethiopian security forces to hunt ethnic Tigrayans in the capital.

International developments (per 01 July)

- At the US-EU High-Level Roundtable on the Humanitarian Emergency in Tigray of 10 June, Mark Lowcock, UN Under-Secretary for Humanitarian Affairs, reported that the UN documented at least 130 cases of humanitarian access violations: 50 cases involving Eritrean soldiers; 54 cases involving Ethiopian soldiers; 21 cases involving Amhara militia; 4 cases involving Ethiopian/Eritrean soldiers; 1 case involving Tigrayan soldiers.
- The UK issues a statement that it stands ready to work with the Ethiopian government, Tigrayan authorities, the United Nations, and other international partners to expedite the delivery of humanitarian assistance: “It is crucial that there is a political process for all parties to find a long term resolution to the conflict in Tigray.”

Links of interest

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 180 - 03 July 2021

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Reported situation in Tigray (per 01 July)

- Reported that Tigray Defense Forces have started moving into the western zone of Tigray, and major fighting is expected to take place in the next days.
- The UNSC has discussed the situation in Tigray, as France took over the Presidency of the UNSC on Thursday in which members insisted on the need for dialogue and reconciliation.
- UN OCHA earlier briefed the UN Security Council on ‘tragedies of historic proportions.’ US Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield said the US stands ready to assist Ethiopia in solidifying and implementing a cease-fire and providing life-saving humanitarian aid and resolving the conflict.
- The UNSC discusses the situation as aid and supplies to Tigray need to be scaled up, and communication and electricity need to be restored.
- Norway states at the UNSC that the continued presence of Eritrean forces is a threat to regional stability and calls for their immediate withdrawal.
- The Ethiopian Ambassador to the UN reports that Eritrean troops have left Tigray according to “his latest information”.
- USAID Administrator Samantha Powels reports that she has spoken to EU Ethiopia Special Envoy and Finnish Foreign Minister Haavisto about Tigray, and working closely to keep pressing for an end to hostilities & full humanitarian access.
- The World Food Programme (WFP) reports a second bridge over the Tekeze river has been destroyed (which is confirmed by the Ethiopian government) and calls for an Air Bridge to the region to transport crucial supplies, as humanitarian aid is failing to reach Tigray.
- Reported that air access to WFP is denied for 10 days, whilst 3800mt of their food aid is blocked.
- The Government of Tigray commits itself fully to supporting humanitarian access in Tigray: “The Government of the National State of Tigray and the Tigray Defense Forces remains ready to robustly support the United national and humanitarian organizations working to deliver life-saving assistance to the most vulnerable in Tigray.”
- The statement also reads that “We extend our support to ensure the safety and security of international humanitarian workers.”
- The WHO said it ceased operations for 48 hours and 38 staff members were trapped due to hostilities.
- Ethiopia has denied accusations that it’s trying to “suffocate” the people of Tigray by denying them urgently needed food and other aid. Transport and communication links to the region remain cut.
- Deputy PM Demeke Mekonnen told diplomats that “The allegation that we are trying to suffocate the Tigrayan people by denying humanitarian access and using hunger as weapon of war is beyond the pale”. He claimed that Ethiopia was rebuilding damaged infrastructure and restoring services to Tigray.
- Reuters says that just before the capture of Mekelle, it observed a convoy of 34 trucks, each loaded with 43 tons of food, stopped for four days at a government checkpoint. The food was ultimately unloaded before reaching the destination.
- A senior diplomat told Reuters that no food has reached Mekelle since the Tigrayans recaptured it.
- TPLF spokesperson Getachew Reda has told Reuters that the continued government shutdown of services and supplies was seen as a continued “Act of War”.
- According to several sources, the Eritrean president Isaias Afwerki, and other Eritrean members of the leadership, are nervous about the potential repercussions of the current developments in Tigray. They

fear that Eritrean army commanders might take action to remove them from power. There are also fears that the Tigray Defense Forces might invade Eritrea.

- In a piece for the New Humanitarian, Lucy Kassa has written about the toll that it is taking on journalists covering the news of massacres in Tigray. She says that she “used to feel sad about when people died from COVID-19. Now, I don’t feel anything.”
- The conflict has had a strong effect on Kassa; the cruelty and barbarism that she has encountered has left her “short of words to describe her agony”. The level of cruelty was hard for me to comprehend.”
- She finishes by saying that what she has reported is only the “tip of the iceberg”.
- Amhara forces have looted private and public properties from the town of Alamata in Southern Tigray.
- “The Amhara militia and special forces has looted shops, market centers, stores, and construction materials since 01 July 2021. And they were transporting it to the town of Kobo inside the Amhara region,” said a witness.

Developments in Ethiopia (per 01 July)

- The Oromo Liberation Front and the Oromo Federalist Congress, the two main opposition parties in Oromo, have declared that the region does not have a legitimate government anymore, and have thus declared the “establishment of the Oromia Regional National Transitional Government of Oromia (ORNTG) on this day of July 1, 2021”.
- The OLF and OFC say that the Federal government is “diligently working to dismantle the Oromo Regional State” and that “the 6th national election is null and void since it does not meet the criteria of an election by any standard.” They add that political opposition was almost non-existent due to opposition parties being “forced to withdraw”.
- In effect the OLF and OFC have declared their intention to secede from Ethiopia, and set up their own government structures. They have said that they would hold elections within three years, establish a parliament, and establish a separate executive.
- The arrest and profiling of ethnic Tigrayan activists, civil society workers, lawyers and businessmen has been intensified at a larger scale in Addis Ababa. Shops, internet cafes, restaurants and other businesses owned by ethnic Tigrayans were also closed by Ethiopian federal forces.
- In some places of Addis Ababa, internet shops were told by Ethiopian federal forces to register the name of ethnic Tigrayns who use the internet for hours.
- Ethio-Forum said journalist Yayasaw Shemelis has been abducted by Ethiopian federal forces and intelligence officers on 02 July and his whereabouts remain unknown.
- The Committee to Protect Journalists said that Ethiopian Journalist Abebe Bayu who works for Ethio Forum media was abducted by four men and forced into a car. The men brought him to the side of a cliff, stole his phone and his money, and told him that if he were to move, he would be shot. The men also told him “not to criticize the government”. They then left him near the cliff.

International developments (per 01 July)

- EU Foreign Affairs Chief Borell has said that ““A cease-fire doesn’t mean cutting a region off power or destroying critical infrastructure”. Instead it is about doing everything possible to help those vulnerable and in need.
- The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, has said that the situation in Tigray is continuing to deteriorate.
- Tanzanian Zitto Kabwe, leader of a Tanzanian opposition party, writes that PM Abiy Ahmed must be stripped of his Nobel Prize in The Continent.

Links of interest

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Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 181 - 05 July 2021

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Reported situation in Tigray (per 04 July)

- 7000 Prisoners of War were walked into Mekelle town in a disciplined parade.
- The Government of Tigray has announced seven (7) conditions on 4 July to a negotiated ceasefire.
 1. Invading forces from Amhara and Eritrea must withdraw from Tigray and return to their pre-war territories; members of the Eritrean security, intelligence and defense establishment in Ethiopia must leave the country immediately and without any delay; any contacts, be it domestic or foreign, that bear directly on the national interest of Tigray must go through the legitimate and legal Government of Tigray; the resolution of issues related to Tigray and Eritrea must be predicated on dialogue with the Government of Tigray alone.
 2. There should be an agreement on the need for the United Nations to establish an independent investigative body, and once that body is established, on the need to put in place proper mechanisms for bringing perpetrators of crimes to the International Criminal Court.
 3. Allow the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid to the people of Tigray from all directions using all necessary modes of transport; facilitate the return of all Tigrayans, internally displaced and refugees, to their homes as well as ensure the return of civilians brought in by the invading forces to their previous homes; create propitious conditions for the repatriation of governmental and private properties looted from Tigray without any form of delay; create conditions in which full compensation for the damage inflicted on Tigray, such as the destruction of basic infrastructures, and service providing social-economic institutions is secured without any delay.
 4. The people of Tigray must have full access to all forms of services, such as electricity, telecom, banking, air travel, education, healthcare, transportation, commerce etc. without interruption and any form of hindrance; allow the operation of international flights directly from airports in Tigray without any preconditions.
 5. Respect the constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and accept the fact that the constitution is the sole basis for any negotiations going forward; enable the democratically elected Government of Tigray, with all its powers, and constitutional responsibilities, to resume its regular work; release the budget transfer that the people of Tigray were constitutionally and legally entitled to receive in the 2020-2 budget year; no members of the defense forces, federal police, security and intelligence institutions will be allowed to enter and operate in Tigray.
 6. Given the expiration of the mandate of the federal government as of September 25, 2013 (E.C), subsequent decisions by the federal parliament, federal courts, any proclamations, directives, decisions, issued by the entities at all levels of executive branch, and judicial and administrative decisions aimed at the State of Tigray and Tigrayans lack legal force, and as such, should be considered null and void; relatedly, Tigrayan politicians and members of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF), who are languishing in jail solely on account of their identity must be released from their illegal detention without delay; current and former Tigrayan members of the ENDF in detention must be released, with all the benefits they are legally entitled to fully restored. Tigrayans illegally expelled from the Addis Ababa City Administration as well as from all federal institutions on account of their identity must get all the benefits that they are legally

entitled to. All other Ethiopians who are in jail solely on account of their identity must also be released without delay.

7. The Government of Tigray considers the creation of an independent international entity entrusted with the task of following up on the implementation of these preconditions for a ceasefire be a non-negotiable element of the ceasefire itself.

- Fierce fighting between ENDF allied forces and Tigray defense forces has been reported in the Western zone of Tigray.
- Video footage broadcasted by Asena TV shows that ENDF soldiers destroyed the Mekelle Martyrs Memorial Monument and Museum when they fled the regional capital.
- A press release issued by Mahbere Kidus Yared Zeorthodox Tewahdo Church reads that “Genocide has been declared on the people of Tigray”. The press release states that Ethiopia is using starvation as a weapon of war.
- The Tewahdo church press release states that hunger is worse than the battlefield and lists that:
 - In the recent Togoga massacre 64 persons were killed and more than 200 injured after an air bombing;
 - More than 80% of the medical centers have been looted and damaged;
 - More than 193 young men and women were killed and thrown off cliffs in Mahbere Dego;
 - More than 1200 monasteries and churches are ruined, religious treasures looted;
 - More than 160 priest and worshippers were massacred;
 - 28 priests were killed in Guetelo Medhaniale Church while in service and Christians were massacred in the monastery of Debre Abay;
 - Nuns and children were raped and alien elements were inserted in their genital organs;
 - More than 90% of agricultural products are destroyed;
 - Civil residence houses are destroyed and pillaged and the Tekeze bridge is destroyed to stop humanitarian aid coming to help the people of Tigray;
 - More than 850 people were killed in Axum town;
 - More than 900 monks and nuns have been expelled and killed;
 - Villages of Tembien, Bora, Selowa, Chellena, Samre and Gijjet were victims of non stop bombings and raids.
- The press release states that the genocide is ongoing due to the siege on Tigray preventing assistance.

Development in Ethiopia (per 04 July)

- There are multiple credible reports of increased intimidation, harassment and mass arrests of ethnic Tigrayans in various cities of Ethiopia including Addis Ababa.
- Reported that hundreds of ethnic Tigrayans who were arrested in Addis Ababa have been transported to Awash Arba military camp in the Afar region.
- The arrest and profiling of ethnic Tigrayans has been intensified in Gambella, Benishangul-Gumuz, Amhara, Wolayta, Arba-Minch and Dire-Dawa, among others.
- There are also reports that the federal Ethiopian government is planning to present ethnic Tigrayans political prisoners as Prisoners of War.
- The closure of ethnic Tigrayans owned hotels, restaurants, cafes, shops, boutiques and other small businesses has also been intensified in Addis Ababa.

Situation in the Horn region (per 04 July)

- Sudan has called for a ceasefire and dialogue in neighbouring Ethiopia, warning of regional instability, as fighting intensified in the war-hit Tigray region across the border.
- "The Sudanese government is deeply concerned about the developments in Ethiopia, which may have a negative impact on regional stability," it said in a statement.
- Sudan also urged "all the parties in neighbouring Ethiopia to stop the fighting and come to the negotiating table."
- El-Sisi said Egypt's approach in the negotiations with Ethiopia on GERD over the past ten years has been based on reaching a legally binding agreement in accordance with international norms.
- "Egypt has never threatened any country directly or indirectly throughout history despite its great military power," he added.

Links of interest

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/ethiopias-tigray-demands-troop-withdrawals-ceasefire-talks-2021-07-04/>

<https://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/416521/Egypt/Politics-/Egypys-Sisi-says-negotiations-with-Ethiopia-over-G.aspx>

<https://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/2/10/416528/World/Africa/Sudan-urges-ceasefire-in-Ethiopias-warhit-Tigray.aspx>

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 182 - 06 July 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of universities, research organizations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported situation in Tigray (per 05 July)

- In an interview with the New York Times, Debretsion Gebremichael, the Tigrayan President of the region, said that he “didn’t expect to make it back alive”.
- He told the NYT that the Tigrayans knew the Ethiopians were coming. According to him, the ENDF and its allies had been massing troops along the border for a while already in preparation for an attack on Tigray.
- According to Debretsion, the Tigray Defense Forces defeated 7 out of the 12 Ethiopian divisions sent to the region and killed over 18 thousand soldiers.
- He elaborated that the Tigrayan forces were caught off guard by a large UAE drone and bombing campaign, which cut Tigrayan supply lines.
- He also said that the Tigrayans were planning on expanding the conflict to the rest of Tigray until all foreign forces, both Eritrean and Amhara forces, had left. “They have taken the land by force, so we will take it back by force,” he said.
- More than 7000 Ethiopian War prisoners were paraded through the streets of Mekelle. Debretsion said that most Ethiopian prisoners of war would be released. The officers will however remain in captivity.
- Debretsion has also rejected the UN and Ethiopia Human Rights Commission (EHRC) joint investigation into the massacres in Tigray, saying that it was partial.
- Reported that power has been restored today by the Government of Tigray in some towns including the city of Mekelle.
- According to video footage broadcasted by Asena TV, more than 416 ENDF’s Prisoners of War walked into Mekelle from Eastern Tigray.
- Asena TV also said over 428 Ethiopian soldiers were captured recently in Southern Tigray.
- Reported that ENDF soldiers destroyed computers, studios and other vital equipment of Tigray Mass Media Agency (TMMA) before they fled Mekelle last week.

Developments in Ethiopia (per 05 July)

- The Addis Standard is reporting that it has been receiving an increasing number of arbitrary arrests and ethnic targeting of Tigrayans.
- They have several accounts of Tigrayans telling them that police and federal police accompanied by men in civilian clothes have been stopping them and asking them for identification.
- Twelve journalists were also recently arrested over the last few weeks.
- The location of the people that have been arrested is often unknown.
- Reported that Ethiopia is going to close 30 of its Embassies and consulates worldwide.
- Ethiopia’s Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said on Monday his nation had better dramatically reduce the number of overseas missions.
- Abiy told the parliamentarians, “at least, Ethiopia would need to close 30 of its embassies.”

- Abiy said Ethiopia would no longer sustain all its foreign missions purely for economic reasons. "The ambassadors of embassies to close may follow up from Addis Ababa."
- Ethiopia, according to him, is facing debilitating inflation that needs to be addressed, and an insurgency backed by foreign powers and the international media.
- Currently, Ethiopia has 43 embassies and 49 consulates worldwide.
- According to Nation Africa, Ethiopian Embassy in Kenya among the 30 to be closed.
- Al-Jazeera says the Prime Minister of Ethiopia Abiy Ahmed has defended the decision to fight rebels in the Tigray region and said he wants to foster a period of "silence" in the area.
- Abiy said the country could raise more troops if needed but said he wanted a period of calm after months of fighting in which thousands have been killed.
- "In one, two or three weeks, 100,000 trained, armed and organised special forces can be mobilised," Abiy told lawmakers.
- Abiy added: "If said special force isn't enough, if a militia is needed, in one or two months half a million militiamen can be organised. One million youths can be mobilised and trained."

Situation in the Horn region (per 05 July)

- The Ethiopian Prime Minister has said that the GERD dam is meant to produce electricity without harming countries downstream.
- Sudanese Irrigation Minister Yasser Abbas said Sudan has asked the UNSC to intervene in the dispute caused by the GERD because the dam has become a threat to regional peace and security.
- The UNSC is set to meet on Thursday over the matter at the request of downstream countries Egypt and Sudan.
- The minister also called on the council to urge all parties involved from taking any unilateral measures, including the filling of the multi-billion-dollar dam's reservoir.
- Abbas also said: "We hope the Security Council would respond to our demands... our expectations are positive, but we do not know the final result [of the session]."
- "Our demands are logical and clear and contribute to solving the issue," added Abbas.
- Daily News Egypt says Ethiopia has officially notified Egypt of the start of the second filling of the controversial GERD dam.
- Egypt's Irrigation Ministry responded that Egypt rejects any unilateral action which violates international laws governing management of transboundary rivers.

International Situation (per 05 July)

- The Secretary General of the UN has said that he is "deeply concerned" about the situation and that "The presence of foreign troops is an aggravating factor of confrontation" is aggravating the situation.
- The Guardian has published a series of photos depicting the captured Ethiopian soldiers being marched through Mekelle. They include several pictures of female soldiers.
- They depict many soldiers being marched through Mekelle or transported in trucks. Many people can be observed celebrating on the sides.
- EEPA is holding a Webinar on Voices From Tigray: "Hunger For Peace, Hunger For Justice" on 13th July at 14:00-16:00 EAT, 13:00-15:00 CET, 07.00-09.00 U.S. East. You can register here for the webinar: <https://bit.ly/3jPwi1t>.

Links of interest

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/03/world/africa/tigray-leader-interview-ethiopia.html>
<https://nation.africa/kenya/news/africa/ethiopian-embassy-in-kenya-among-30-to-be-closed-3462318>
<https://addisstandard.com/news-analysis-fresh-wave-of-arbitrary-arrest-of-tigrayans-in-addis-abeba-rights-commission-says-it-is-monitoring-the-situatio>
<https://addisstandard.com/news-benishangul-gumuz-regional-government-appoints-25-former-rebels-in-different-positions/>
<https://www.yenisafak.com/en/world/ethiopian-premier-says-nation-should-reduce-overseas-missions-3575839>
https://www.theguardian.com/world/gallery/2021/jul/05/captured-ethiopian-government-soldiers-reach-tigray-capital-in-pictures?CMP=share_btn_tw
<https://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/416606/Egypt/Politics-/Sudan-resorted-to-UNSC-because-GERD-poses-a-threat>
<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/7/5/ethiopia-abi-ahmed-defends-tigray-conflict-rebel-gains?sf147121235=1>